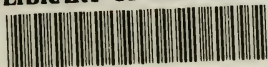


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SONGS OF FLYING HOURS



“But ever I hear my red rose call
Out from the night where the shadows lie.”

SONGS OF FLYING HOURS

BY

DR. EDWARD WILLARD WATSON ✓

Author of "To-Day and Yesterday"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

AGNES M. WATSON



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SONGS OF FLYING HOURS.

POESY.

Not all the wayward moods of April hours,
Nor shadows flying down the velvet hills,
Nor trees, nor grasses, nor the scented flowers,
But the intangible faint soul that thrills
The breath of dawn, the soft, dim scent,
That brings to longing hearts sweet discontent.

Not the unutterable and limpid blue
Of silent water, nor the rushing sea,
With unknown shapes appearing dimly thro',
Bring to the poet's true soul its ecstasy,
But what, beyond the sea he cannot know,
And what lies in its depths, far down below.

Not the light thought that on its airy wing
Flits thro' his mind and out into the light,
Not every song that plumèd bird may sing,
Nor the pale moon lighting the lonely night,
But the mysterious beauty, veiled and faint,
The half-unknown, that artist may not paint.

The love that tangles in its fragile knots
The hearts of mortals for a passing day,
And the great love, impersonal, that blots
Their little sun out with its blinding ray,
And men and nations, with their hopes and fears,
And smiles that glitter from a sea of tears.

And all the aspiration of the soul
That longs for life, resistless and complete,
And shudders when the shadows closer roll ;
That thrills in victory, crouches in defeat,
With all the bits of beauty and of pain
That from an old-world's story still remain.

These are the themes, wider than rolling earth,
That fill the soul with music till the pen
Strives to portray, in all their grief and mirth,
The many things that make the lives of men ;
And some true poem grows, like a little flower,
And throbs in beauty for a passing hour.

IN MEMORY'S GARDEN.

Flowers of the olden time, bright jessamine
And honeysuckle tossing on the wall,

And marigolds that bloom adown the walk,
Shell-bordered, where the pebbles faintly call
And crackle underneath slow-coming feet,
And box-tree hedge and bouncing-Bet, and sweet,
Beneath the long striped grass, the snowdrop lies,
And lily of the valley droops and waits,
And Jacob's ladder and the four o'clock,
And lady's slipper and blue violets,
And cat-faced pansies and sweet mignonette,
And bachelor's button and sweet-William sway,
And bending fuchsias and geraniums,
And yellow crocus and the daffodil,
And rose of Sharon and the hollyhock,
And wine-dyed dahlias and chrysanthemums,
With ragged-Robin and the scarlet sage
That flames in autumn when the leaves are dead,
And lavender and mint and poppies red ;
And, on the wall, the moss rose, like a flower
Before its time grown old and marked to die ;
And all their scents commingle with the hum
Of bees that swarm no more and chirp of birds
And insects ; and the ant-hills by the walk,
And corners where the moss grows soft and green
And trellised vines, and purple grapes between ;
And all the blossoms of the summer-time,
And spring-time, and the autumn, throng and cry,
" We live forever ; it is you who die ! "

OLD THINGS.

The old things are the best, even though time
May dim the gilding, and the sheen grow dull :
For on the crumbling wall the ivy clings,
And in the heart the old flowers bud and bloom.
For with the eld is rest ; the gnarled tree,
The house grown gray, the rooms all dull and dark,
Are filled with visions ; yea, and all the things old—
Things that we once had and that now we miss—
Old lovers, and the moon that rose of old,
And flowers of blossom rare and subtle scent
That wraps them all with memories faint and sweet,
Like linen old laid up in years gone by
In some old chest of cedar, with the flowers
Of pale-faced lavender ; and the faint light
Comes to the eye that looks, the heart that longs,
In holy dimness, thro' the tears that fall.

MY RED ROSE.

Passionate flower that bloomed for me—
Red, red rose, by the garden-walk,
Tall as the hedge-row, straight as a tree,
Bending down from thy pale-green stalk—
Thou hast gone where the shadows lie,

Out in the night where the demons creep,
Out in the night where fond hopes die,
The deep, dark night where our loved ones sleep.

Thou hast gone out, and thy petals fall,
Pale and withered and dimmed with dew,
Blown where the night-winds croon and call,
Answering faintly, fond and true ;
Out in the night where the shadows lie,
Out in the night where the demons creep,
Out in the darkness where fond hopes die,
The lone, dark night where our dear ones sleep.

Lone is the path in the garden left,
Dull are the trees and the flowers gay ;
Missing thee only, of thee bereft,
I would follow thee far away ;
Out in the night where the shadows lie,
Out in the night where the demons creep,
The long, dark night where fond hopes die,
The lone, lone night where our loved ones sleep.

Weep for my red, red rose that grew
High by the side of the garden-wall ;
Flowers may bloom for me fair and new,
But ever I hear my red rose call
Out from the night where the shadows lie,

Out from the night where the demons creep,
The awful night where our fond hopes die,
The dread, still night where our loved ones sleep.

“IN THE LAND OF SLEEP.”

I will go down to the “Land of the Sleeping,”
I will go down to the “Land of Sleep ;”
For I may find there a heart that’s keeping
Love for me ever with eyes that weep.
I would cry to her, “I am weary,
Grown so old with the wear of things ;
Thou, in the land which I thought so dreary,
Float forever on youth’s glad wings.

“I am old with the old world’s story,
I am worn with the old world’s woes,
I have enough of fame and glory,
And all the prizes the old world knows ;
I am steeped with the cry of battle,
The pain and anguish, the tears and blood,
The crash of the cannon, the rifle’s rattle,
And the wail of its desolate widowhood.

“I have so much to tell thee, leaning
Weary head on thy welcome breast,
Words and sighs and the silence meaning

More than the words of the world's unrest.
I would kneel to thee—weeping—praying,
' Only forget—as I once forgot.'
I would listen to hear thee saying,
' Others forgot thee, but I did not.' "

I would hark, with heart that's throbbing,
Only to hear thee lisp my name ;
Smile, and smother with smiles the sobbing
Cry of my heart that sinks with shame.
We would love in the " Land of Sleeping "
More than the love of the world's short years ;
We would fly, while the world was creeping,
Into the silence where no man hears.

We would wander away forever
Thro' the fields where the day is dim ;
Darkness and dying no more could sever
Happier hearts than the seraphim ;
Time would vanish and years go over,
Care and the life of the long lost days,
While forever the loved and lover
Thread the maze of the pathless ways.

Love's fruition, the heart's rejoicing,
Pain a phantom that's lost in joy,
Souls the hope of the silence voicing,

Sin a dream to no more annoy ;
This is life in the land of dreaming,
This is love in the world of death,
Lit by sunlight forever streaming
Or lost in shadows that brood beneath.

I will go down to the " Land of the Sleeping,"
I will go down to the " Land of Sleep ;"
There I will find a heart that's keeping
Watch for me ever with eyes that weep.
I will cry to her, " Take me only
Into thine arms and forget the past ;
Love me—forgive me—the world was lonely,
But there is rest in thy love at last."

LOVE.

Love is a flower
In the dim woodland hiding ;
Love is a rose
Scenting the morning air ;
Love for an hour,
Love for a life abiding,
Ever it grows
For hearts that long and dare.

Love is a dream
That comes by night unbidden ;
Love is a vision
Fading with the dawn ;
Love is a stream
Beneath the rushes hidden,
Murmuring derision,
Laughing us to scorn.

AT THE GATE.

Dear Love, I wait, just at the gate,
Beneath the gnarlèd apple-tree ;
Its blossoms sweet fall at my feet,
While here I wait for thee.

Stars shine above that know my love,
And light the sky for thee and me ;
The moon steals white on the still night,
While here I wait for thee.

For spring is come and fire-flies roam,
Like falling stars that glint and flee,
And all is still ; the daffodil
And I wait here for thee.

Birds flutter soft in boughs aloft,
Where in the dark I cannot see,
And damp, sweet air blows on my hair,
While here I wait for thee.

Flash stars above with silent love,
Bloom flowers of earth more rich and free ;
My heart beats high, my love is nigh,
My love has come to me.

REMINISCENCE.

'Tis not the peaceful beauty of the vales,
Nor glory clinging to the ancient hills,
Nor the low murmur of a thousand rills,
Nor the sea sparkling with the distant sails,
That makes the heart beat high, the bosom sigh,
And brings the tear unbidden to the eye.

In some old garden, wild-grown and forlorn,
We come by chance and stand in idle mood,
Where, rioting, run, like creatures of the wood,
The staid old blossoms once so nobly born ;
And, with the mingled sweetness of the flowers,
Steals over us a dream of unknown hours.



“In some old garden wild-grown and forlorn.”

The very odor of the soil is sweet,
The scent of hedges and the mossy gate
That bids no more the weary traveller wait ;
The long-grown grasses tangled round our feet,
The hum upon the heavy air ; they all,
To the dazed soul, some misty scenes recall.

Down Cairo's street we wander, strange and new ;
Past mosque and minaret and o'er the land
Where, lone upon the desert's drifting sand,
Watches the Sphinx the world's long ages through ;
Or down the Nile we drift, with curious sail,
Remembering faintly all its scented gale.

What are ye, O ye sorrows, that assail ?
For never heart with joy and hope beats high,
But Melancholy, ever sad, doth lie
Upon us, and her music is a wail
For something known once and forever fled,
For some one loved and sometime lost and dead.

Is it the old ancestral heart that beats,
The ancient cells we guard within our shrine,
That thrill to strains, for human ear too fine,
When the far traveller on his journey greets
The lands his fathers loved, for which they bled,
Those multitudes, now silent, lost and dead ?

Thrill ye, O buried shapes, when o'er your grave
The footfall of some far descendant comes?
Do ye rise up, and to your crumbling homes
Come swarming, phantoms of the strong and brave?
And do ye whisper in some wondrous way,
And on our heart-strings your weird music play?

Is there a soul in every man who lives
Unknown to what he proudly calls "Himself"—
A purer spirit, far above the pelf,
That to our living zest and fulness gives—
A soul that knows what we may never know,
But waits and watches till we nobler grow?

A soul that warns, a soul that strives to tell
Each earnest heart, but finds no language fit,
That writes within us, with faint gleams that flit
Across our darkness, words we cannot spell,
While, in our unbelief, we smile and doubt,
Yet love and wisdom wait unseen without?

Oh, nobler part we long for, reach thy hand
Down to the humble soul that strives to know
Thee, and, forever clasped with thee, to go
Thro' ways of life none else can understand.
Strive with us still, thro' all our erring years,
Tho' 'tis thy sorrow fills our eyes with tears.

WHERE LIES PARADISE?

Oh, where lies paradise?
Is it where gleaming rivers flow?
Is it where scented zephyrs blow
O'er blossoms rare?
Not there it lies.

Oh, where lies paradise?
Is it where dreamy towers rise, white
Against the moonlit night,
In meadows fair?
Not there it lies.

Oh, where lies paradise?
Is it in happy homes
Where, at the eve, man comes,
Nor cometh care?
Not there it lies.

Oh, where lies paradise?
Seek in your heart and find,
O man, forever blind,
Where love lies, there
Lies paradise.

TRAVEL.

Round every ruin, like a clinging vine,
There creeps a dim remembrance faint and sweet.
We wander on thro' storied halls, and meet
A something everywhere none may define ;
Where rusted armor ever mutely waits
For sound of battle at the castle gates.

The heart of man warms ever to the old.
The very spicery of the hedge-rows green
Calls like a voice from out the past, unseen,
And tells us we are one, tho' time has rolled
Legions of years betwixt our lives and those
Who lie forgotten, where some garden grows.

'Tis something underneath the mind we know ;
Nor history telleth, nor the eye that sees,
But some ethereal essence on the breeze,
Some perfume on the winds that idly blow,
Some faintest tinkle of a distant bell,
Some wailing music in the sea's low swell.

Seek Memory ! Stretch thy loving, eager arms
To reach the misty cloud of shades that swim,
Like phantoms, thro' the vales of memory dim,

In the faint light that frights us while it charms.
Tho' soul may shudder, or tho' heart may leap,
Into our arms they ever, loving, creep.

LOVE'S MIRAGE.

O mirage of the arid sands of life ;
O Love, that cometh trembling o'er the plain ;
O joy, that lendeth to the heart an hour
Of languor and delight, but hath no power
To banish the eternal pang of pain,
Dreamy and soft we see thee, like a star,
And toil to reach thee thro' the burning sands,
Yet never may attain thee, shining far
Beyond the circle of our earthly lands.
Thy palm-trees droop, thy fountains plash in vain ;
We cannot catch thee, ever flying before,
Vanishing in the desert wastes again,
And, as we fly to grasp thee, seen no more.
O mirage bright, O land that never was,
O vision of a heaven we cannot reach ;
O Love, the Infinite, the earth shall pass
Away into the silence, and our speech
Shall die in stillness, with one last " Alas !"
O syren song, O light of golden hair,
O tangled threads that shame the golden light,

O snowy breast, O faces, pale and fair,
We miss you when forever falls the night ;
For never arms shall fold nor lips shall press
To lips, all cold, one day in nothingness.

AT LAST.

I come, O heart so true,
At last to thee.
All others fail,
And, wan and pale
With the rude blows
The world has showered on me,
I come for rest to thee.

Down at thy feet
I lay the sins of years ;
I claim no mercy
In my bitter pain,
But thy blest tears,
Falling upon me like the gentle rain,
Free me from fears.

O heart that never tires,
O heart that never fails,
Ever forgives, nothing requires,

Tho' I have wronged thee sore,
My tired head I rest
Upon thy breast,
And roam no more.

LOST ATLANTIS.

*For every heart, Atlantis lies,
A land of dreams, beneath the sea ;
Lost long ago, like paradise,
But treasured tearfully.*

For from below, where sea-blooms glow,
And emerald algæ wind and float,
As music strange doth swell and flow
Up to our drifting boat.

The bells are tolling, faint and sweet,
In the old towers that crumble there,
For friends whom we no more can meet,
For hopes that vanished in despair.

*There, down below me, ever lies
The joy, the light, the heart so free,
Where lieth every love that dies,
Lost with Atlantis in the sea.*

TIDES.

The tide is out, and the yellow sand
Glints back the light of the setting sun,
As he sinks to rest in a crimson band
That lingers after the night's begun ;

And life goes out, and the pallid face
Lies cold and still, and the eyes we know
Glance back no more with a winning grace,
Nor hide, 'neath lashes, their tears' o'erflow ;

And hope goes out and the world is bare,
And the barren sands of life are seen,
And wealth is flown, and carking care
Thrusts its grim visage our joys between.

But wait, for again the tide will come ;
And list, for the ripples will surely flow,
And glad waves seek once more their home,
On the yellow sands, in the sunlight's glow.

For life has tides, and it comes and goes,
Though but for a moment it may abide ;
And, sure as the ocean forever flows,
Death's ebb will yield unto life's new tide.

HE NEVER SAW THE SEA.

They say the sea is wild and grand,
And waves come rolling in so high
They dash upon the solid land
And throw their foam against the sky ;
That ever-blessed breezes blow,
Tho' long and hot the season be,
And there 'tis perfect joy to go ;
I never saw the sea.

'Tis fifty miles from us to where
Those breezes blow and billows rage ;
Here summer's long ; from sultry air
There's no escape for youth or age ;
The nights are close, the houses hot,
One longs for once to wander free ;
But I am poor, and so cannot ;
I never saw the sea.

I used to watch them coming home
At evening, when the air was still,
With ruddy faces, fresh with foam
And spray, that blows with welcome chill.
I wondered what the waves were like,
And longed, and dreamed, with childish glee,

That once the spray my face did strike ;
I never saw the sea.

Give me a chance, O stranger kind,
To reach that shore before I die.
I see no more—my eyes are blind—
Nor earth, nor even the sultry sky ;
But I can fancy what 'tis like,
If once the breeze blew cool on me,
And if the spray my face should strike,
My lips would kiss the sea !
My soul would know the sea !

WESTWARD.

Out of the East we came, with faces set to the West,
Leaving the lands of peace, warring forever with
men ;
Daring the virgin wood and the crag of the eagle's
nest,
The roar of the river's flood, the deadly mist of the
fen.
Ever away to the West, to the brink of the unknown
sea,
And we float in the wrack of the storm till we drift
to a shore unknown.

Conquering ever and stern, and cruel our hand
must be,
Tarrying only to reap from the field another has
sown.
Over the trackless land till the utmost sea breaks
dark,
And we rage with a mad desire, for beyond are the
worlds we fled.
Shall we fly ever west like the bird, or drift like a
burning spark,
To fall at the end of the world and cease when our
hope is dead?
Or shall we turn again to reconquer the lands we
scorn;
Sweep like a whirlwind of fire on the homes of
plenty and peace,
Leaving the gold of the West for the silvery light
of the morn,
Till, filled with the whiteness of light, forever our
wanderings cease?

EASTWARD.

In rarest hours of rarest days
A voice cries in my heart to me:
"Go forth, and seek through many ways
A land that lies beyond the sea."

“ For this unknown but subtle scent,
This glamor that an hour doth fall,
Waking thy soul to discontent,
Is but thy lost land’s distant call.”

The lanes of England lovely are,
The Scottish heather sweet to see ;
But still the voice calls, faint and far :
“ Tarry not here ; I wait for thee.”

Nor German land, nor German tongue,
Nor isles of the Ægean Sea,
Nor yet the light that lingers bright
Upon thee, golden Italy.

The names that stir my pulses’ beat,
In unknown tongue, are dear to me :
Provence, the land of roses sweet,
And, dearer still, fair Normandie.

Call me, O call me, till I come ;
In life, in death, my soul will cry :
“ Not here, not here can be my home,
Nor these my fields that round me lie ;”

For far away, across the sea,
There lies a land whose scenes I know,
Whose plains and mountains wait for me,
And for my soul its rivers flow.

Not here, not here, where alien things
And alien men my soul assail ;
But to my land my soul, with wings
Of love, would fly, though strength may fail.

I dwell, a stranger, in your gates,
O people of these new-found lands ;
My heart in sorrow droops and waits
For its dear home with reaching hands.

And ever comes, by day or night,
When least I look, some little thing,
Some trick of shadow, glint of light,
Some note of bird on restless wing ;

And heart leaps up and heart grows faint
With longing, like a soul that sees,
Far as a star, its love, sweet saint,
And prays for her on bended knees.

My soul leaps up, then sad it grows,
And sinks in sorrow with a sigh ;
Its home, its land, alas, it knows
It may not reach before it die.

Yet, maybe, when the day is done,
And, from its chain, life springeth free,
High in the air of heaven fair,
My land, I then may float to thee ;

For souls may drift, like fleecy clouds,
Across the sky of death and night,
And in that hour, resistless power
May guide their memory's longing flight.

Then, fair Provence and Normandie,
And shores that fringe the ancient sea,
And languorous air and sunlight fair,
I yet may live and love in thee.

For longing lives, though life go out ;
Yea, longing lives—the mightier thing,
Till, rising high o'er death and doubt,
We soar on its resistless wing.

MY MOUNTAIN TOP.

O mountain top, so clear, so dear,
I know thy every seam and scar ;
I know where light lingers when night
Creeps up thy hills, with day at war.
I know where morn in gold is born ;
While darkness still the vale doth fill,
I watch thy peak above the cloud,
That silent floats when storms are still.
Thy summit high will never fly
Before the driving wind and rain ;

Thy green-clad side will still abide,
Tho' men may go and come again ;
Nor time can mark, nor dawn nor dark,
Nor will thy purple fail at eve ;
But thou shalt stand alone, and grand,
While years into the ages weave.

A PICTURE. (Paraphrased.)

Behind the cottage the forest spread,
Like turf that covers the buried dead—
Beautiful, awful, filled with sights
And shapes and sounds and elves and sprites—
Beautiful, terrible ; none might dare
To enter its shade but the fisher there,
Sitting, at eve, in his cottage door,
Mending his net on the sanded floor.
He can dare where others fear.
What to him the shapes that rear
Their fantastic limbs above ?
All within him filled with love
Toward mankind, and peace and joy,
Fear in him has no employ ;
Or if darker thoughts intrude,
Shudders creep, fancies delude,
With a fervent prayer he scatters

All their wiles ; to him it matters
Little whether demons hear him,
So the angels' selves be near him.

WHO SLEEPS BENEATH?

The slender spires reach to the sky,
Their arches airily springing ;
The vast gray walls seem up to fly,
The ivy to them clinging.

They shade the land, themselves in light,
Shadows below them flinging,
And half the world beneath is night,
Tho' chimes for morn are ringing.

What wondrous artist drew the plan,
What grand designer dreamed it,
What workers, mightier than man,
Love's dearest task have deemed it?

Who laid the massive stone beneath
Its corner proudly rising ?
Who stood before it, holding breath
At its pure lines surprising ?

Behold, the maker lowly sleeps,
The shadows o'er him streaming ;

As higher still each spire leaps,
Lies he in endless dreaming?

For now they mourn for him and grieve,
And anthems chant before him,
And myth and mystery they weave
In shadows falling o'er him.

THE SOUL GARDEN.

I.

Within our eyes a garden lies,
Where souls may wander at their will ;
It wakes to life when daylight dies,
And blossoms when the world is still.

When eyes are closed in weariness,
And, for our rest, we longing lie,
And life is dull, and dreariness
Fills all the soul with empty cry,

Then out before our closed eyes
Bright colors flash and wane and glow,
And iridescent shapes arise,
And waves of color flow.

A star intense, of brilliant white,
That gives the mind a sense of pain,
Burns in the eyelids, till its light
Fades into darkness, and again

Its growing edges glow with hues
Tinged round with a prismatic light,
And soon its centre dark renews
Its fire with flashes bright.

And if awhile we fix our eyes
Upon the form that for us grows,
Its spirals quickly higher rise
Into a glowing rose,

And banks of pale-blue blossoms soon
Encircle it, when, lo ! 'tis changed,
And purple droplets downward run,
In varied rows arranged.

Behold the Soul of flowers, that moves
The world of matter to their birth,
Souls of the blossoms nature loves
And spreads upon the barren earth.

II.

And now, amid the throbbing mist
Of color, figures strange appear—

All varied shapes that can exist,
And faces droll and drear.

They move, from left to right, so fast
That mental eye can scarcely trace
Their outline as they hurry past,
Bound for some undiscovered place,

While whorls of every color gay
Flash out and burn upon the view,
And quickly, as they fade away,
Return in combinations new.

III.

But if we will, with all our will,
The flying figures pause and stay,
The panorama standeth still,
In all its color gay.

Then can we study closer all
The wondrous picture, line by line ;
Each face to memory recall,
And strive its meaning to divine.

Whence come they ? Doth the memory lay
Them all in store, to be brought out
In border-land, 'twixt dream and day ?
We query, in our doubt ;

Or are they caught from things around
Our sleeping-place, our waking hours?
Are they the souls of sight and sound,
Or do they hint of deeper powers?

Can we discern, when oft we yearn
To know the future, or to guess
What far away goes on, to-day,
To bring us grief or happiness?

Doth soul of thing unto it cling,
And wrap its being, fold on fold,
Or do our eyes but changes ring
By night on what was told

When, open-eyed, we, waking, tried
To see the world in every guise,
Till, when we sleep, the visions ride
Through space, before our eyes?

IV.

Are, then, the gardens of the night
Useless to us, for purpose sure,
Meaning no more, no nearer right,
Than dreams, no fitter to endure?

Or do they tell, if we might know,
The story old we long to hear,

Of all that on the earth did grow,
In times remote and near ?

Can it be true, as mystics rave,
That all the world its story sings,
If but the ears to hear we have,
And understand the soul of things ?

IN THE LIBRARY.

The fire is dim, the light is low,
And silent, in my easy-chair,
I sit and dream, and fancies flow
About me in the darkling air.

The walls with books are covered well ;
Quite to the ceiling high they rise,
And in the darkness I can tell
Where each beloved volume lies.

But now they seem to live and move,
And faces from their bindings stare ;
And all the authors that I love,
And their creations, fill the air.

They never speak ; their eager eyes
Look for companions never found,

As each into the darkness dies
In turn, and makes no sound.

And groups float by, but never gaze
Upon each other ; all, intent
On unknown errand, go their ways,
Or stand in mute bewilderment.

What are ye—real or feignéd things ?
And will ye live some grander life,
When we, who breathe, have lost our wings,
And fallen, silent, in the strife ?

And who are greatest, those who found
A city grand, a palace high,
Or those who till the spirit-ground
Of fancy, that can never die ?

For men may live, and do, and dare,
Yet fade away, by all forgot ;
But these creations, foul and fair,
Live on, and perish not.

THE KALEIDOSCOPE.

Into a tube, with mirrors lined,
We empty all that's in the mind—

Scraps of the sunlight, gleams of hope,
Small bits of love in homely guise,
And things from books, wherein one looks
At times, in hope to grow more wise ;
And remnants of antiquity,
And black and blue and hazel eyes ;
Bright thoughts, and days of darkness, when
The lights go out, and rarest times
That children have, and sometimes men ;
With bits of scene from foreign climes,
And awful things ; philosophy,
And metaphysics, creed and prayer ;
While doubt and faith their tribute bear,
And music, with its dulcet strain,
And law that curbs with iron rein,
And lawlessness and mystery,
With jugglery and history ;
All these we bring, and cast behind
The little mirrors of the mind,
That catch them all, and then reflect
And multiply, as they collect,
Into a figure uniform,
The odds and ends with which we swarm.
And, gazing with the mental eye,
We wonders in the tube descry,
Richer than starry fields that lie
Above us in the jewelled sky ;

For with each turn there springs to view
A radiant world of vision new ;
And though each bit is old enough,
And we can analyze the stuff,
And see the rags and tinsel there,
The wondrous whole is, oh ! so fair ;
And all is by reflection done—
Three images combined in one.
This is the mind ; it just combines
What bits it has in varied lights,
And multiplies by three, and finds
Its rich reward in wondrous sights ;
And all we think and all we find,
And call the product of the mind,
Is but the viewing common things
In mirrors, and a hand that flings
The mass around, and, lo ! there springs
To light some star with radiant rings.

THE MASQUE.

A bal masqué is life, and men
And women to the music dance ;
When lights burn low, the partners then
Into each other's eyes may glance,
But never may they cast aside
The veil that hides their being real ;

They come, they go, they march, they dance,
And through the mazy circle steal ;
They cling, they clasp, they love, they sigh,
They guess and many questions ask,
But never may the cords untie
That fasten on the face life's mask.
Oh, when doth soul unrobe and shine
Before its fellows bright and true ?
Some day, dear heart that I call mine,
Shall you know me and I know you ?

LOST HARMONY.

O dweller on some other star,
To whom comes, faint, the light of this,
Thou canst not know what hearts there are
That live, and long, and die, and miss,
Through morn and eve, through shining day
And lonely night, some blessed thing,
That ever lures them on their way,
And then evades, with swifter wing ;
Some happiness, that words will fail
Ever to tell, or thought to feign ;
Some light in which their sun grows pale,
Some melody that mocks the strain
That here they pour from breaking hearts.

Oh, what can be that ecstasy
That lies beyond our sighs, and parts
The things we are from all we long to be?
Are we discordant notes, seeking lifelong,
Our place of rest in some sweet, wondrous song?

A SONG OF AUTUMN.

Drift, leaves, across the lonely path
Whereon I walk when frost is nigh ;
Blow, winds of autumn ; let your wrath
Darken the world's low, threatening sky.

Blow, leaves, before the sighing wind,
In colors gay to dimmer grow ;
Sing, leaves, your low, sad song, and find
A grave beneath the coming snow.

Flame, leaves, against the gray above,
Flash out in scarlet, dyed blood-red,
For gone is all the green we love,
And the bright world of flowers is dead.

Wither, crumple and rustle, leaves,
Blowing along the garden-walk ;
Winter cometh, and nature grieves
For the blossoms lost from the empty stalk.

Veil, mists, the glory on the hills,
Where die the trees, in passion's hour,
In blazing agony that fills
The misty distance ; perish, flower,
And die, ye scarlet blossoms lone,
That flaunt when all are gone but ye ;
Droop to the winter winds that moan
A requiem for the flower and tree.

BEHIND HER FAN.

My love unknown, for thee I wait,
For thee I watch by day and night ;
I cannot wander wide and free,
As thou dost, in the gay sunlight,
And, oh, thy feet, they come so late.

My love unknown, I watch for thee,
While here I wait from morn to eve ;
I deck myself in fair array,
And many charms for thee I weave,
Like bird for whom no mate may be,

Or like the flower of early May,
That spreads its scented petals wide
For wandering bees that venture far
Upon the spring's aerial tide,
And blooms and hopes away.

And long I wait thy lingering car,
And time still hurries swiftly on ;
Each face I scan to find the man
That I may rest my love upon,
And trust my fate to make, or mar.

And still I wait, and sit, and scan,
And take the chance that comes to me,
Among the few that stingy fate
Gives out, by chance and grudgingly,
Behind the fluttering of my fan.

But happy thou, my unknown mate,
To scan the world, to stand aloft
And criticise the flowers sweet,
And test, and try, discarding oft,
While we still watch the hours fleet,
Where music sounds and dancing feet.

THE ROSEBUD.

Laughing, she plucked a rosebud white,
Damp with the dews of coming night ;
She placed it on his breast, and said,
“Guard you this, living ; guard it, dead.
For with the man who this shall bear,
And him alone, my heart I'll share ;

And him who brings me safe this flower
Thro' battle, will I love that hour."

O'er the green fields the battle-cloud
Winds like a white and ghostly shroud.
The rose, wherever danger lies,
On his brave breast, to meet it, flies ;
Where thickest cloud hides struggling men,
It folds the rosebud closest then.

At dawn of day, war's thunder o'er,
The maid steals from her cottage-door,
With many a curious, anxious one,
To see the work dread death has done.
With throbbing heart she draweth near
And searcheth for her cavalier,
Yet will not think he can be here,
For he is something almost dear.

All faces strange ; heart lighter grew,
As to the front she nearer drew ;
There, at her feet, a soldier lies
Beside his steed, with stony eyes ;
Over his heart his hand, in death,
Is grasped, as though to stay his breath.
One look she gives into his face,
Raises the cold hand from its place ;

Beneath, the snowy rosebud lies,
Guarded, in death, from careless eyes.

“Tho’ dead he brings my rose,” she said,
“And comes to claim me from the dead.”
Then stooped and kissed, with fluttering breath,
His lips, and fell there, white in death.
And underneath the vaulted dome
Of the old abbey, in one tomb,
They sleep ; where idle travellers stray,
And peasants kneel at eve to pray.
Above, carved in the stainedèd stone,
There lies a rosebud, writing none.

THE BALLAD OF THE LOST SOUL.

The prince of the spirits that rule the air,
And over the earth hold gentle sway,
Has mounted in haste, and over the waste
And into the night has ridden away.

And through the gloom at last he has come,
Through mists of darkness and death-clouds deep,
Through endless shades, where the last hope fades,
To the iron gates where the lost souls weep.

High were the pillars on either side,
Lost in the cloud was the topmost stone ;
Open the way, but no foot might stray,
And the road lay silent, untrod and lone.

*But alway an angel, shining bright,
In the pathway stood, and barred the way,
And he flashed with light on the ebon night,
And beyond him the land of the blessed lay.*

*His eyes were blue as the sapphire stone
As he stood, all pitiless, stern and still,
And for ages gone had he dwelt alone,
To guard the gate from the souls of ill.*

“Angel of light, I come, through night,
To crave a boon from thy mighty hand;
A mortal maid in the grave is laid,
Who is dearer than all in my spirit land.

“She scorned the love of the sons of men,
She pined, and faded, and died to be
Free as the air, when the sun shines fair,
And live in the boundless sky with me.

“Oh, where hast thou hidden the soul of my love,
The soul of my love who died for me?
O'er the earth I rove and the sky above,
And now I have come for her soul to thee.”

*The angel shone in the wondrous light,
And his sword was grasped in his white right hand,
And its blade flashed out in the gloom about,
And drove back the souls to their lonely land.*

*Row on row, in the silent air,
Crowded their faces, grim and gray,
And they murmured aloud, like a threat'ning cloud,
But their eyes forever looked far away.*

“What hast *thou* done?” the angel cried,
“Prince of the air, with the souls I gave?
For I bid thee keep the souls that weep
For the little sins that the world forgave.”

“ I have taken, O angel, the souls that sinned
With a little sin, while their hearts were true ;
I have sowed them wide on the green hillside,
Under the heaven and the sky of blue.

“ I strewed them wide and I strewed them far,
And they lie o’er the fields in a golden sheen ;
And they toss in the breeze like the spray of the
 seas—
Stars of white in a sea of green.

“ I hid them under the oak-tree root ;
I clad them in purple and palest blue ;
I bended their head, like a hope that’s dead,
And I shaded them soft, like a love that’s true.

“ I buried them deep, and safe I keep
The souls that burned with a mad desire ;
There, soft, they sleep, and the tears they weep
Shine under the earth like sparks of fire.

“ I dropt in the wave the souls you gave,
And under the ocean they wind and sway ;
On the rocks they grow, where the light is low,
And gloom and silence abide away.

“ Give back my love ; I have done thy quest ,
I have saved the souls that ye bid, from blight ;

The humble, they rest in a lowly nest,
And the daring I dyed in colors bright,

“ And ever they toss and proudly nod
To the blowing wind, till the day is done,
From the bright green sod gazing up to God,
As they wait His hour at the set of sun.”

Then the angel cried, with a bitter cry,
“ The soul you seek in your hand I laid.
Far from your eye have you let her lie,
Lost mid millions and sore dismayed !

“ O heedless prince, thou hast failed to keep
The soul that was fairest of all I gave ;
Have you left her asleep in some prison deep
Under the earth or under the wave ?

“ Even now doth she cry and long for thee
On some lone hill, when the sun is gone ;
Or, lost to the sight, in the silvery light
Of waving blossoms, waits she alone ?”

The prince is silent ; he answers not ;
But out in the darkness speeds away :
He searches the mine where the rubies shine,
And ever he seeks, by night and day,



“ And ever the angel stern and cold
Standeth silent and answereth not.”

Down in the gloom of the ocean blue,
Under the sea where the lost ones sleep,
And the ships they manned strew the soft white
 sand,
And the sea-weeds over them wind and creep.

Ever the hillside haunteth he,
And the dismal shade of the forest deep,
And he finds no rest for his tortured breast ;
He has lost the soul that he longed to keep.

Somewhere, in sorrow, a flower blooms,
And lifts its face to the sky and weeps ;
Somewhere it grows, and the angel knows,
But the angel the secret forever keeps.

*And ever the angel, stern and cold,
Standeth silent and answereth not ;
And the sword he doth hold is fiery gold,
And its blade is inlaid with fire hot.*

*And ever the faces, sad and white,
Rise up against him and wrap him round,
And his sword is the light in the awful night,
And the sound of sobs is the only sound.*

MYTH.

The stories of the Eld are ever young,
The stories of to-day are ever old,
The very Bible of the earth was sung,
When first mythology was told.

I.

Can a myth die, that's made of cloud and sky,
And land, and sea, and calm, and raging storm,
That's woven of the light and webbed with night,
With mountains, valleys and the sunbeam warm?
Can a myth die that tells how nature strives
With rugged substance, in each thing that lives?
Can a myth die that blooms with every flower,
That paints the flying hour and tells us oft,
Of fate that lives, of chance that gives;
That names the mighty powers that high aloft
Wander at will in zephyrs soft,
Or fly upon the gale in cloud-wreath pale,
That peoples the unknown on land and sea
With beings rare wrapped round in mystery?

II.

We dress the new in garments of the old,
And, lo! the new is but the old refined;

We clothe the old in modern gold,
And through its tracery fine old faces shine ;
We reach our arms above, we reach below,
And sweep the world with all-embracing quest ;
But in the wide embrace our arms enlase
Only the myths the world has loved the best.

FROM THE VILLAGES.

Out from the fields and woods the visions came,
Up from the ocean's, deep, mysterious gloom ;
Man saw and loved them, and to each a name
Gave, and within his heart he found them room ;

And the winds blew on, and dust of ages fell
And wrapped their images, and covered o'er
The legends that the elders loved to tell,
Of the great gods who lived and ruled of yore.

But to the woods and fields they all had fled,
And dwellers in the wild found oft, by chance,
At morn or eve, that they were never dead,
Thrilling beneath some unknown being's glance.

And the rude people loved them, and did twine
Flowers round the broken statue, creep by stealth
To ruined fanes, and pour their gift of wine,
Beseeching longer life and perfect health.

And these were pagans ; from the wood and plain
They drew their knowledge ; but to-day the wise,
In their great cities, wisely can explain
Goddess and myth, and trace their lowly rise.

But to the fields men go again ; the trees,
The grass that withers, the ephemeral flower,
The fitful sighing of the scented breeze,
Speak ever to their hearts of love and power ;

And deep beneath the wisdom of the creeds,
And nearer than the gods to whom they bow,
They recognized, forced by their daily needs,
That in their hearts they are pagans even now.

Out from the villages the faith has crept
In the Divine, that fills the great and small,
While theologians smiled and bishops slept,
Pan, from the river-side, did ever call ;

And dryads danced, and elves and nymphs displayed
Their airy limbs, in misty vesture clad ;
And now, the staid old world shrinks back dismayed,
But we, the villagers, laugh and are glad.

THE SONG OF ORPHEUS.

Then Orpheus sings ; the air is still as death,
The clouds hang low and drift along in tears,

The sunbeams tremble, and the fluttering breath
Of dying day forgets the coming years.
Time bendeth down ; Fate stays its cruel hand,
And its death-dealing dart rests in the sky ;
And on the mountain-side the torrents stand,
Poised motionless, in azure ecstasy.
The boughs droop low, the rustling leaves are still,
Nor fruit remembers through the green to blush,
The wild things of the forest lose their will
To rage and ruin, and the perfect hush
Of night falls o'er the world's mysterious day,
While low the moon looks o'er the distant trees
And lends its tremulous and mournful ray ;
The tawny lion thinks no more to seize
The tender fawn that lingers on its way,
And in the sunbeam, mute, the motionless bees
On silent wings, the birds, astonished, stay,
Between the listening earth, the attentive air,
All gathered, wrapt in wonder, listening there.
He sang the sun, the light, the shining stars,
The life of all things ; then, in melody low,
He told of pallid death, of battle's scars
And all its pangs and all the awful woe.
He sang the regions, desolate and dark,
Where roam the hopeless shades, and long for light,
Crouching among the shadows, pale and stark,
Against the blackness of the endless night.

He raised his voice ; hope thrilled them as he sung
Of heroes brave resting from toil and war,
Ever reclined Elysian fields among,
Where all the truest hearts of mortals are.
He sang the dead, before the unbending fates,
Receiving all the dole of wasted years,
Beseeching entrance at the iron gates
That open not, to anguish, nor to tears.
He sang the river, flowing soft and still,
Where happy souls, steeping their senses deep,
Yield to the arms of nature and her will,
And back to life, as children, silent creep.
He sang the struggle of the heart that strives,
He sang the courage of arm that dares,
He sang of blessed heroes and their lives ;
He ceased, he smiled, and, taken all unawares,
The listening ring around him silent stood ;
The creatures of the field and of the flood,
The fauns and satyrs and the nymphs that hide,
And the pale nereids, resting on the tide,
Drew a long sigh and vanished swift and still,
And lonely as before lay field and hill.

THE SONG OF PAN.

I am the lord of the world ; I fill
Everything living, good and ill.

I am the cloud o'er the shining sun ;
I am the light on the web that's spun
Over the grass, like threads of glass,
And I am the dewdrops, every one.
I am the music that softly floats,
And the brazen trumpet's stirring notes ;
I am the song of the wood-thrush sweet,
And the tinkling bells and the dancing feet.
I am the trees and the growing grass,
And the song-bird that sings at morn and eve ;
I am the laugh that the happy laugh,
And the bitter tears of the souls who grieve.
I am I ; in the dark I lie,
Weaving the dreams that float and fade.
I am the sunlight of summer-day,
The passing shadow, the deepest shade.
I am the joy of the man who loves,
I am the fear of the maid who flees,
I am the strength of the arm that works,
I am the rest of the soul at ease.
Everything—all things that spring and grow,
And silent lie, and the grains of sand ;
The ocean, the waves that come and go,
The shore, and the mountains that shade the land—
All is mine, and my life divine
Sparkles and flames like the beaded wine,
Roars in the cataract's noisy flow,

Blushes and glows where the roses grow.
I am the dead, for the dead I claim ;
I am the giver of pride and shame.
Rivers murmur my voice, and low
Sobs the gray sea in my ebb and flow.
Rattling rain and whispering wind
Are but the moods of my changing mind.
I am the winter, the smiling spring,
The buds that burst and the leaves that cling ;
I am the summer's burning heat,
And the autumn, creeping with weary feet.
Ever I live in the seed that springs ;
Ever I die in the death of things,
Ever I build up the mountains high,
Ever in quiet deeps I lie.
Drifting in mist of the morning cold,
Shining in sunset's blazing gold,
Life and death, and chance and fate,
I am ever busy, yet ever wait.
Mine is the power by which ye move
The modern world from its time-worn groove—
The force of the magnet, the power of the steam,
And the powers to come that ye little dream.
Now can ye name me, sons of men,
Or must I ever evade your ken ?
Haste ! To my temple your offerings bring ;
I am Pan, and the soul of the everything.

THE SONG OF BRAHMA.

Alone I dwell ; no man can tell
The secret of my dwelling-place.
Alone I dwell ; in tiny cell
I wrap the spark, deep in the dark,
Turning away my shining face.

O weary night, whose endless years
Are lost in tears,
While waves of ever-flowing time
In silence glide on noiseless tide.
O glowing day, when in the play
Of life I take an actor's place,
And revel in its wild array
And struggle in its maddening race,
Or stand aside, yet still preside,
And scenes shift on while I abide.

This is my sport ; the starry vault
Would cease to spin did I cry, " Halt !"
Unto its fiery charioteers,
Once in a thousand million years.
I burn to live, tho' I am life ;
I long to be a million lives ;
I yearn to mingle in the strife
Of atoms, swarming in their hives.

No anger stirs my heart when ye
Hurl mad defiance up to me ;
No pity holds my arm ; I sweep
Your countless millions—as ye reap
Your fields of grain—to death and night,
With war and famine, age and blight ;
For all the life for which ye long,
And all the joys ye cling to, seem
To me but baubles—some faint song
That lulls the ear with passing strain,
And into silence dies again ;
Your æons, moments in my dream,
And death to me is life, and life
Is death ; for both are but the throbs
Of my great heart, whose life-blood sobs
And laughs, and rushes to the strife
That it creates, till, tired of play,
I fling ye—broken toys—away.

I brood above the mist of things ;
I rest upon the sea of white
World-foam and fire, on silent wings.
Egg of the world, my cell divine,
First germ of life, from out thy dot
Come all things. All your life is mine,
For without me ye all are not.
All the dark night beyond the light

Is turned to day by me. My sight
Creates the things I ever see
With closed eyes, all dreamily.

*I am the life that never lives,
I am the death that cannot die ;
I am the power that ever gives,
Yet ever has, eternally.*

I give the spark that lights the dark
And springs to being, in the sea ;
I miss it not—the tiny spot
That makes your life ; I cannot be
Alone forever, ruling free
The endless void ; for, near and far,
I must companions make for me,
And people every circling star.
In me they live ; do I but chance
To wish that other worlds may be,
I sleep, and, sleeping, dream ; I glance
On things that never eye did see.
Behold ! I wake ; my limbs I shake ;
And, lo ! the vision of my dream,
Grown foul or fair, it liveth there
Created—filled with life's mad stream
And constellations, new and bright,
Speed through the blackness of the night.

But when I sleep, still on they keep
Their busy way, nor droop, nor fail,
Nor suns go out in gloom and doubt,
Nor moon and stars grow faint and pale ;
For till the life I give I take,
They circle, though I sleep or wake.

*For I am life that never lives,
And I am death that cannot die ;
I am the power that ever gives,
Yet ever has, eternally.*

AT MYLITTA'S SHRINE.

Before the brazen gates that never close,
On either hand, there pointed to the sky
Pillars of granite, tinted like the rose,
Against the blue of the unclouded sky ;

And inward, twisted strands of color led
To guide the footsteps of the stranger guest,
Where, like the flowers in some fair garden-bed,
The Assyrian maidens wait the fates' behest.

They clustered round each towering marble shaft ;
They lay in glad abandon on the green,
Like rosebuds, mid the purple shades that laughed,
And the bright sunbeams slanting down between.

He stole, with weary feet and heavy heart,
Worn with the sea, thro' rows of beauty, where
The world's flowers blossomed, and from all apart
Sat one whose face was sad ; no trifling care

Weighed on her bosom, but the heavy load
Of the world's sorrow, with its bitter sting,
That passed her careless sisters on its road,
And fluttered to her heart, with wayward wing.

There fell the softened splendor of the sun,
Thro' golden mist, in dazzling aureole,
And in her hair its rays red glories spun,
Thro' which looked out the wonder of her soul,

From eyes, whose tint no lips can ever tell,
Speaking, in silence eloquent, his eyes
Responding, as the hopes within him swell
That need no words when love exulting cries,

Saying, " For ages have I loved and sought,
On thro' the world in guise of many lands,
Bearing the gift of love, the heart unbought
I offer thee, with these outreaching hands."

And she, still thro' her maze of golden hair,
Eyes speaking, lips all silent, cried to him :
" Thou art my love, perfect and brave and fair,
For whom I longed through endless ages dim ;

“Nor law, nor life, nor death can ever mar
Our joy, for we have loved and still will love,
Whether on earth, or wandering wide and far
Among the stars that gem the skies above.”

“Take the poor coin Mylitta bids me give.
Unbind thy brow; let thy bright hair fall low.
To me 'tis life to love, 'tis love to live
Where thou art and with thee thro' life to go.”

And down the purple shadows of the past,
That fain would veil the lovely southern land,
We watch them, far across time's chasm vast,
Wandering till lost to sight, still hand in hand.

HESÍONE.

Weep, O ye maidens gazing down
The Trojan walls toward the sea,
Nor royal race, nor royal crown,
Can save the sweet Hesíone.

For garland-crowned, in tears and chains,
She waits the monster of the sea;
What soul that lives can bear the pains
That rack thee, sweet Hesíone?

Fathers may weep and mothers pray,
But no escape is found for thee ;
A maiden falls in death each day,
And now, at last, Hesíone.

Up from the wave, with angry cry,
He comes, and all the people flee ;
To look, to stay, is but to die ;
Alone waits, chained, Hesíone.

But see leap forth a stranger grave,
Of noble bearing, brave and free,
And by her side he stands. " Oh, save
The rose of Troy—Hesíone."

One blow, and back the monster falls
Dead at their feet beside the sea,
Then loosens he the cruel thralls,
And back leads sweet Hesíone.

" Now give, O king, thy promised gift ;
Give me thy steeds, like zephyrs free ;
My sword, that not in vain I lift,
Has rescued thy Hesíone."

" Out from my sight," the maddened king
Cries. " Bar the gates ! No gift for thee ;
I owe thee nothing ; hither bring,
O slaves, my own Hesíone."

But on the plain before the gate,
And fair to sight, where all may see,
The stranger doth a moment wait,
Who saved the fair Hesione.

“I go, O king ; but back I come,
And bring a thousand swords with me ;
Destruction waits thy house and home,
False father of Hesione.”

And days went fast, and silver sails
Came swiftly o'er the purple sea ;
And now, too late, with terror quails
The father of Hesione.

THE CRY OF PROMETHEUS.

I.

I, lone Prometheus, of the stolen brand
Caught, blazing, from the fireside of the gods,
Who in Olympus kept the ruddy fire,
While pale-faced mortals shook with biting cold,
Now, chained forever, high beyond the cloud,
Amid the boundless ice-field, and the rocks
Stern, unrelenting, as the powers above,
Cry, in defiance, through the dismal night.

II.

O Zeus, I robbed thy hearth ; do now thy worst.
O race Olympian, gaze, with faces drawn
With endless laughter, looking down on me,
Whose face is drawn and seared with endless pain ;
For up beyond you do I lift my eyes,
Through the hot mist of tears I cannot check,
And cry to him who rules you and your race ;
For ye are but the creatures of your day,
Though now that day seems endless unto me,
And far above, great Chronos ever lives,
Dwelling beyond you, in the realms of time,
Past, present, future, with his threefold face ;
And up to him I clamor, " Save me, Time."
For in thy past I murmured and I strove,

And in thy present I consume with pain,
But in thy future men shall bless my name
And praise the gift I stole them from above.

III.

For men are but a simple, guileless throng,
Nor look they higher than the hills they see,
But down before Olympus bow they long,
And take the gifts the gods give, tremblingly,
While I was ever daring, like my sire ;
The immortal blood ran madly in each vein ;
I could not bear man's misery, and my ire
Was kindled while I marked his toil and pain ;
For from the distant sky I saw the heat
Doled out to him each day with miser's hand,
Till, scorning danger and divine defeat,
I scaled the heaven and stole the flaming brand ;
And now no more in darkness they abide,
No more they perish with the deadly cold,
But gather round their fires at eventide,
In the long nights and winters, safe in fold ;
Nor will the fire fail, but brighter grow,
Gift wrung from gods above for men below.

IV.

O Chronos, greater than the Olympian crew,
Lord of the future, shall it ever be

That this, my deed, men shall proclaim untrue,
Or find its blessing turned to misery ?
For I have brought to man a blessed boon
Of endless comfort ; can it ever grow
In his mad hands, time coming late or soon,
A gift of death, a heritage of woe ?
Thou sayest, do I hear thee speak, afar,
That it shall be an ever-growing curse,
And earth shall brighter glow, a blazing star,
Flaming through night of worlds, while, curious,
The planets stare upon its ball of light
Till 'tis o'erwhelmed in one appalling glare
And leaves a cinder, wan and desolate ?

V.

Savior to-day, destroyer yet to be ;
Yet for to-day, men owe me thanks and grace,
And for to-morrow, vast eternity
Must find my daring soul some resting-place,
When these high rocks, these scarred and seaméd
hills
Are melted by the heat, in fiery rills.

VI.

I watch the firelight in each happy home,
And glory in the new-gained hope for men.
No longer, cold and desolate, they roam,

When the bright sun retires beyond their ken ;
For I can see, with eyes immortal, bright
With heavenly fire, the shining fields below ;
See how my dear loved race its way doth fight
To newer life, warmed by the fire's glow ;
How all the ages rush in progress on,
When erst they plodded with a laggard step ;
And I have given this last, best gift to man,
And though I die a thousand deaths, 'tis won.

VII.

For in the fire are all things : light and heat
For man to-day, and endless store of good
Through future ages. Spark of flame divine !
No tongue can tell the ending of thy race.
Great earth shall change ; the face of nature wild,
And rugged rock, and frozen field shall yield ;
Night shall be turned to day, and floods and streams
And ocean give their secrets at thy nod ;
Space, with its weary leagues, a foot-path brief
Shall seem to him who, in some future age,
Flies over earth and sea, and soars the sky,
Nearer and nearer to the guarded height
Where tyrants dwell. Even the feeble mind
Shall, roused by fire, grow mighty, and a flame
More subtle than thy lambent tongue shall stir
The race of men to untold deeds of power

And untold kindness, as their souls grow great
In thy blest light, as trees grow in the sun ;
For without light men perish, and the grass
Withers away, and blighted petals drop
From the gay flowers, and desolation spreads
Like a dark cloud o'er nature and her bloom ;
But in the fire that I have given to man
Lies the one secret of his growth. His birth
But lowly seems, yet as he warmer grows,
His powers spring far above the stony soil,
Until he dreams of an immortal life
In regions where the sun, eternal, shines ;
And his proud spirit, cased in flesh no more,
Shall fearlessly, forever, higher soar.

VIII.

But jealous are the gods who rule on high,
Of man, nor love for him do ever show ;
And alway at his side some god stands nigh
To thwart him and his hope to overthrow.
Invisible they come, unseen they go ;
Yet, ere they go, they strike, and ever falls
Some savior of the world, by hate laid low,
Who, dying, for their aid, imploring, calls.
Thus do they fool the foolish race of men,
Thus bind them down forever to the wheel,
And smile a scornful smile at even, when

Men throng, devout, and in their temples kneel.
For man wrings all he has from reluctant powers,
Strikes down God's sword to reach the longed-for
prize ;
Though ever, through the hard-fought conflict's
hours,
He lifts to heaven in prayer his piteous eyes.
Smile on, Olympians ; man shall scale again,
In ages hence, your calm and cloudless height,
And stand before you, an avenging foe,
To drive you forth into the endless night,
Where no delight is, nor are couches soft,
Nor flowing nectar, nor your rich attire,
But only tears of anguish, as aloft
Ye see him, resting, mid your heart's desire.
Bring back Old Time ! Bring Chronos back to-day !
Crown the great king whom Zeus has driven away.
Hurl down from yon proud height the immortal
throngs
To immortal misery, while we sing their songs.

IX.

Now can I look, with eyes made clear by pain,
Into the future and to distant lands,
Where no man dwells now ; but again
Great cities grow, numberless as the sands ;
And ever the celestial fire he brings,

And ever grows the flame beneath his hands,
As, by its light, at evening hour he sings,
And o'er it in his hours of toil he stands.

X.

I can rejoice—I, brother of your race ;
Through all my pain my heart leaps up for joy.
Brother am I of every soul who looks
Beyond the heritage of to-day, and claims
The future's rich bequest ; who frets to think
That other hand than his may helpful be,
In some far-distant age, to bless the world.
I live ; for life immortal is my bane,
And in the coming days my race shall still
Spread among men, still steal the flaming brand,
Bring light to darkness, give to striving man
All the great powers the world of gods has used.
In war and peace my fire shall ever spread,
Till man becomes immortal ; yet whene'er
Men of my line shall seek to emulate
This deed of mine, then shall both gods and men
Seize on the daring one and chain him high,
And leave him writhing, for he cannot die.

XI.

Lonely and cold, I glory in my pain ;
For years shall fly and time forever flow,

Worlds shall decay with age and grow again
Into new youth, and new-born systems glow,
While I, immortal, shall forever see
The universe and all its destiny.
For over me are but the glittering stars,
To which I look in anguish, and beneath,
The fitful fires of men, when down I glance,
And gather joy through pain and panting breath.
What though I suffer? Man is blest through me.
I brought to earth the soul and life of fire ;
I raised the captive to a throne, made free
To grasp the utmost gift of mad desire.
Like God he grows ; for knowledge, with the flame,
Into his heart, steals like the kindling spark,
And ever, when they hear his dreaded name,
The faces of the gods grow stern and dark.
For he is like them, as the twig the tree ;
For he is like them, as the bud the flower,
And more and more like God he yet will be,
Until the coming of his destined hour.

XII.

Weep, gods Olympian ; curse me as ye gaze.
I love your curses more than all your praise ;
For ye made man own brother to the brute
That roams the plain and swims the silver sea,
Descendant of the meanest and the least

Of living atoms that in ocean be :
He, struggling, rose, slowly, in ages long,
Through sea to land and o'er the earth, a throng
Brutish, in war perpetual, still he rose,
Borne ever nearer in his dying throes ;
While, careless, on the heights, your songs ye sang,
And o'er his head oft-times your thunder rang,
As from your walls ye leaned, in idle hour,
Dropping the crystal cup, the fragrant flower,
And watched him warring on the plains below,
And stole down, silent, when the game did grow
More eager, and he called upon your name.
He saw not, as now here, now there, you came,
Invisible—an unseen, deadly foe,
Withering with pestilence and poisoned dart,
Raising mad floods some wretch to overthrow,
And ever laughing when man's honest heart
Prayed, through the darkness, for your aid and arm
To shield him from your own malignant harm.
But time will find you out ; no longer then
Will garlands crown your images, or, when
He goes to rest, will he lift up his arms,
Beseeching succor ; for the fire that warms
Will rouse his pride and lift him up on high
Another step, and to Olympus nigh.
Weep, Hebe ! Heré ! Iris, with thy bow !
Weep, great Apollo ! Man will lay thee low ;

Weep for your lost Olympus, as ye roam
Through dreary Æther, driven from your home,
Until ye light upon some unknown star,
And, on the earth, no more remembered are.

XIII.

Now am I long forgotten by the world ;
Though over you I hang forever nigh,
And though ye know not, and my very name
Has slipt from memory or become a sigh
Of ancient fable, still ye worship me,
And I rejoice when down I look and see
The temples that ye rear to one who bears
Another name, yet he and I are one.
For to the earth he came from heaven high,
To bring you life and immortality ;
And life I brought, for life is in the fire—
Even life immortal—as the flames rise higher.
Who gave you more ? A savior such as I,
Or he, unknown, who, for a few brief hours,
Bore what I bear forever, while no sky
Contained for me a rest amid its bowers.
Who gave you life ? I, with my blazing brand,
Or he who gave what none have seen, or can ?
For mine the fire, not his, that warms the heart,
And mine the light that lighteth all the world.
Where is his flame that bringeth life and peace ?

For still ye war and toil and sin and die.
No life hath earth but mine, nor will the gods
Let peace, they have not, on the sad earth lie.

XIV.

And now men worship me, yet know me not ;
For I am he who hangs upon the tree
Forever crucified, so high aloft
That ye imagine me to dwell in heaven.
The cross ye daily worship is but this—
The symbol of my fire ; for in my hand
I brought the spark hidden within this wand.
Now, bound upon it and uplifted high,
I warn the world that every striving soul—
Even he who brings a blessing to mankind—
Is by the gods, who envy him, destroyed.
Wherever bright eyes shine with hope and love,
Wherever men strive from the woes of life
To lift their fellows, there an unseen power
Standeth, invisible, with uplifted spear,
And man's defender falls, his hope laid low,
Lest he to be a god should by his knowledge grow.
But were I free, were there another prize
Stored up in heaven, in the Olympian's hold,
I'd scale the skies again and dare once more
Even this agony, could I but bring
Another gift, even life's eternal spring.

XV.

I cry to you, I call down from my height ;
I am exalted, as was he who came
Down from the heavens, and even now your eyes
Might see me, in some glare of awful light,
A speck, lashed to the mountain's icy brow.
Come to me ; I am he who brought you life.
Come to me ; rest I offer, rest and chains.
For from above I came, as he ye claim,
Bringing, like him, to men a priceless gift.
Up to me daily, in your deep desire,
Unknowing eyes ye oft do tearful lift ;
But he has vanished, to his heaven gone.
Search the wide sky, and fail to find him there,
While I, who everything for you have won,
Writhe here above you in this dark despair.
Savior I was, but quite forgotten now
In the bright light that shines for you to-day ;
Forgotten in the gleam I brought below,
Lost in the shadows I have driven away.

XVI.

I cry to you, I call to you :
Come unto me and rest ;
Come wear my chains,
Come bear the pains

That rend my tortured breast ;
For it is I who in the sky
Hang ever over all,
And God am I, though I defy
The Olympians as I call.
I wait the day,
I bless the ray
That upward shines at night ;
I bless the eve
When men receive
Their rest and its delight ;
But never day forever may
Release me from my pain,
And never night for me be bright,
Or bring me sleep again.
I cry to you, I call to you,
Be not deceived, for I
Am he to-day to whom you pray
For aid when death is nigh.
I cannot aid, O hearts afraid ;
To you I gave my all ;
Nor can I save you from the grave,
But still my tears can fall.
For you I weep while soft you sleep,
For you I suffer still ;
But never yet do I regret
Your joy that wrought me ill,

And nevermore, on sea or shore,
Shall mortal eye behold
Suffering like mine, in frame divine,
Which these hard links enfold.

XVII.

Ages had passed, thousands of endless years,
When through the air a voice seemed down to
flow

From one I saw not, yet I shook with fears.
Soft was the voice, no echo answered low ;
Faint was it, but so clear, and came from far,
Even from the depths beyond the outermost star.
“ I hear your crying through the endless years,
I weary as I see you hanging there ;
Yet is your heart unbroken by despair
And burns to act again and longs to dare.
I, Chronos, too, am ready, go once more !
I strike the fetter from each straining limb ;
Go and relieve man's misery ; bear to him
A brighter spark, a far more subtle flame,
And let it burn from him each base desire,
As burns the dross in the fierce furnace fire.”
Then fell my fetters off, and through the air,
Falling, like meteor, in a blaze of light,
I touched the earth, shining against the night,
Still bearing in my hand my wand of fire.

But me they scorned ; the vanquished gods once
more

Swarmed from their hiding-places, cold and dark,
And, rousing all the evil in man's heart,
They strove to rob me of the gift I bore.

XVIII.

I, even I, am he whom men betrayed.
Yet in the days of darkness, when the light
I brought them seemed to fainter grow and fade,
They, half-remembering, searched the boundless
sky,
And dreamed that there I dwelt and did not die.

XIX.

But through the æther once again I heard
That distant voice, far off and yet so clear :
“ Lo ! thou rejected one, I call thee back,
And fit again upon thy mighty limbs
The rusted fetters and the iron links,
And here I hang thee, on thy lonely cliff,
To overlook, for ages yet, thy world.
Yet in the future, when thy bitter cry
Comes up to me, beyond the stars, once more,
I'll loose thy chain and send thee once again
To the mad race that still to thee is dear.
Perchance they then may hear thee when the flame

Thou gavest does its work, though time be slow ;
And hearts may soften, as the adamant
Yields at the last before the fire's glow ;
And one day, but so distant, thou mayst be
Bringer to man of immortality."

XX.

So will I wait in pain, rejoicing still ;
For pain is of to-day, but joy doth fill
Past, present, future with its wave of light,
And still, within my heart hope shineth bright ;
For Chronos lieth not. Time, soon or late,
Bringeth, to even me, a blessed fate.

THE SLEEP OF ALI.

“I weary and would sleep, so wake me not,”
Cried Ali, as he passed unto his tent.
“My spirit longs, sick of the desert hot,
To drift beyond the twining weeds of care,
Beyond the rock-ribbed shores of life, to where
The silent waters of the deep sea are,
And rest in their cool depths, insentient.
Give me, O Sleep, in dreams, the things I miss,
The rest I long for and the peace I love,
And take me, lulled upon thy drowsy breast,
From all the maddening cares and woes of this,
Into the stillness of thy life above,
Where, floating silent, mid the voiceless stars,
No din of life love’s perfect rapture mars.”

Weary upon his couch he sank and slept,
While slaves all watchful round him softly stole ;
And sleep, with open arms, unto him crept,
And folded close his eager, restless soul,
And bore him to a land that’s far away
From all the maddening din of life and day.

All things can come in dreams—the love we miss,
The riches that evade our toiling hands,

The golden smile of kings, the gracious glance
Of queens, the joy of war, the gleaming lance,
And honors, and the calm that never comes
To men on earth, even in royal homes ;
And these came to him, and that dearest bliss
Sought for, untiring, in earth's many lands ;
For lost Ayesha opened wide her arms,
And in her hyacinthine eyes there glowed
The sweetest gift by heaven on man bestowed.
His aged sire came to him, sleeping long
With his forefathers in their rock-hewn cave,
And in his ear, in accents kind and grave,
Poured sage advice and words of wisdom pure ;
And music rose, and every perfect song
That lingers in the heart while days endure.
His fevered pulse beat slower, and the line
Faded, betwixt his brows, contort with care,
And on his cheek the rose of childhood fair
Bloomed once again, touched by Sleep's pencil fine.

Noon passed and evening came, and still he slept ;
The moon rose full and clear, and through the door
Its light fell, and its beams, caressing, crept
Upon his face, lighting each feature o'er,
And no more heaved his breast with labored breath,
For Sleep had borne him to the land of death.

AZRAEL.

Solomon, the king, sat by the road, one day,
That wound, thro' sunlight and thro' palmy shade,
From great Jerusalem—the travelled way
To the vast palace that his might had made;
And as he sat he talked in idle vein
With a companion of the sons of Tyre,
Who strove a secret from the king to gain,
But ever failed to compass his desire.
And up the winding road unto them drew
A stranger grim and mighty, and a cold
And deadly wind upon them sudden blew,
As tho' down icy Lebanon it rolled.
“Whom may this be,” the Tyrian asked, in fear,
“Who cometh, silent and uncalled, to thee?”
“’Tis Azrael, mighty lord of death, and here
He seeketh, surely, only thee or me.”
“Save me, O king! thou canst, thou must!
Waft me away with thy one word of power;
Sweep me, with some resistless, mighty gust,
To distant India, for I dread this hour.”
Then the king stooped and drew upon the sand
A magic figure, like a five-fold star,
And all the powers of air the dread command
Obeyed, and bore the Tyrian swift afar.

But Azrael smiled : " O king, behold how thou
Obeyst, unwitting, His almighty will
Who sent me for thy fellow even now
To India, tho' he sat upon thy hill ;
And as I passed I wondered, seeing below
The soul I seek in India, where I go."

ABSOLUTION.

I.

Priest of God, unto thee I come ;
Day doth dawn, though the mist lies deep.
Trembling with dread from my home I fled ;
I have slain a man in the land of sleep.

Him I met in a region dim,
Where ever the sun shines faint and low,
Where the moon is far as a tiny star,
And rivers speed with a noiseless flow.

In the tangled wood he was lying hid ;
But I saw him lurking, and then I knew
'Twas the soul of the one since time begun
That had made me false when I would be true.

My heart was hot and my anger fierce ;
I knew in my dreaming his life I sought.
But with all my power, as I saw him cower,
I willed the deed that my hands have wrought.

Ask me not if his name I know,
For all the rest of my dream is hid ;
I only remember the river's flow,
And the dim gray light and the deed I did.

But demons of death and hate that wait
For the soul that sins, my soul pursue,
And my hands are red with the blood of the dead,
And ever they cry the long hours through,

“ Murderer, though in dreams and sleep,
Done is the deed with thy soul’s consent,
And there is no hope for heaven’s gate to ope,
Nor will men have pity nor God relent.”

II.

Son, no sin on thy soul doth rest ;
Blood shows not on thy trembling hands.
Unto thee can cling no awful thing ;
Thy soul was roaming in unreal lands.

’Twas but a dream when all things seem
Mingled with fantasy strange and wild,
And the soul of man, do the worst it can,
Is sinless in slumber and undefiled.

For life is the life of the waking day ;
Time enough in it for crime and sin.
But we sleep in the hours, like the sinless flowers
That heed not the world and its maddening din.

III.

Out from the living, O God, I creep,
Naked and chill, to thy silent land ;
Friend have I none, I stand alone,
To wait my doom at thy mighty hand.

Naked and chill, though wrapped in sin,
In the dark and cold with only thee,
Nor glint of a star that's faint and far,
To light the night of thy world for me.

Whither, O God, wilt thou send the soul
Thou hast planted on earth and plucked away ?
For it grew, with the weeds of its evil deeds,
In the wood and fen, in the mire and clay.

IV.

Child of the earth, thou fragile flower
Bending down to the wind that blew,
Life shall seem but an evil dream ;
Wake to the life that is real and true.

Cease thy dreaming, the world forget ;
Lulled be the pain I made thee bear.
Sin and shame are only the name
Of the lesson I taught thee in sorrow there.

Thou hast learned how the soul of man
Lifts, through error, its heart on high,
Up from the sin I placed it in,
To the bright, clear light in the starry sky.

Ages hence, when thy world and stars
Fade away in the mist they are,
Thou shalt weep, and in pity creep
Back to the life of some lonely star.

Love shall well in thy heart, and tears
Fall for the sorrows thou couldst not know
But for the years of sins and fears
Spent in the dream of thy life below.

THE CITY'S GOLD.

Ye people of some lovely, perfect land,
Far from the plaintive murmur of the sea,
Passing your lives in safe serenity,
With none to rule you with unjust command,
Pity us, toilers in the busy mart
That hourly grows, encroaching on the sky;
Whose ships upon an ocean tossing lie
At the storm's mercy, while each trembling heart,
Crushed with anxiety, in sorrow waits,
Beyond your power to aid or understand,
Till certainty announces their dread fates
Or they come safely home, by zephyrs fanned.
For where our treasure is, 'tis truly told,
Our heart is, on the sea, beside its gold.

Ye dwellers in the wood and in the field,
Who watch the springtime in its glad advance,
Who keep the games of old, whose children dance
Around the flowers in May, and when the yield
Of generous autumn fills the bursting store,
Up to the roof-tree shout in joyous glee,
With hearts renewed, in store of plenty free,
Circling in dizzy round the scented floor,
Ye know not how our spring is fraught with care,

And autumn sadly shades the light of life,
Bringing to the toiler gifts of cold despair,
The tyrannous winter and its chilling strife,
While in the dawn the sun blinks pale and cold,
And sets in glory with its hopeless gold.

Give us thy gold, O sun ; drop from thy west
Thy shining bars, thy golden fleece of light,
And then go out into thrice-blessed night,
Ending our toil and all our weary quest ;
Or still we strive, still rob the night of rest
And lose the day, nor aught of beauty see
In the bright world that lives and grows in thee ;
Missing the joy of living and the zest
That makes life perfect, while the haunting fear
Of penury stands ever in the gloom,
Like a dread spectre, seen each day more near,
Threatening our anxious hearts with sudden doom
When, missing thy bright treasure in the sky,
We fall, and with our earth-won treasures lie.

BEAUTY IMPRISONED.

We long for beauty ; shut by loveless walls
In the dark city's heart, where all the green
Has long time withered, until now between
The rugged stone, where hurrying footstep falls,
The timid blade looks out, trembling in fear,

But for a moment, ere the torrid heat
Scorches its life, leaving it brown and sere
Beneath the careless tread of many feet ;
Where the wan tree above the garden-wall,
Dust-laden, shut from nature's kindly light,
Sees for a fleeting hour its shadow fall
Upon the burning pave all desolate.
Yet not a loveless thing the city lies
Beneath its smoky cloud or burning skies.

BY DAY.

Ever by day the flying cloud is seen
Above the housetop, in fantastic shape,
Striving to hide the blue that still between
Its fleeces for a moment may escape ;
And travelling shadows flit adown the street,
And gleams of sunshine gild, with swift caress,
The dingy eaves, where earth and sky can meet,
Into a semblance brief of loveliness ;
And spots of green—mute, tiny plots of grass—
Show, in the arid waste, kind nature's heart—
Heeding not her sad voice, that oft, alas,
Cries in their ear, " Forever hence depart ;
Fly to the fields, far from the trampling feet,
Where wait, from morn till eve, the wild flowers
sweet."

EVENING.

Not all on fields and hills doth beauty lie,
Nor doth she flee the city and its glare ;
Tho' huge it stretch, unshaded, sullen, bare,
Still over it forever broods the sky ;
And tho' we build aloft our gloomy walls
Of glaring brick, with chimneys square and black,
The loving light of evening on them falls,
And lends the beauty that by day they lack.
It takes the trailing smoke-wreath in its arms,
And paints its vapor with a myriad tints,
Giving its threatening cloud a thousand charms,
And thro' its fleece, in rosy color, glints,
When, floating down against the glowing sky,
The day calls, "Come into the west and die."

A SMOKE-WREATH.

Enticing winds attenuate its shades,
And dreamy airs bewreath its sombre browns,
Till in the distance, as it thins and fades,
It loses, as it dies, its sullen frowns ;
For into color rare and tints all fair
Distils its darkness, till bright violet
And rosy purple melt upon the air
That has no lover when the sun is set.

But, ere it sinks, each inky puff and whorl,
Each jet of steam that rushes to the view,
Is tipped with shining gold, each snowy curl
From panting engine showing beauty new,
As ever to the waiting sky ascend
Wreaths of pale snow, into its flame to blend.

THE FACTORY.

The factory, with its hundred glassy eyes
Glaring upon the waste itself has made ;
In windowed ugliness and blank surprise
At the appalling blackness and the shade
It casts around it, bathed in glory lies,
While every dingy thing about it gleams,
And ruby light from every window streams,
As tho' within some raging flames arise ;
And all the red-brick rows, in blinding light
Paining the eye, through the long, shadeless day,
Are wrapped in mystery when cometh night,
To shame their garish glare with violet gray,
When sunset's glory fades from tower and spire,
Where last it lingered, with its roseate fire.

STEEPLES.

And the white steeples of the churches, things
So poor, so crude, so very cheap, that we

Think of ignoble things when them we see,
And the soul fails to soar upon the wings
Of aspiration and devotion true,
When pointed heavenward by design so mean ;
Neglected, in decay, or glaring new
With all the painter's adventitious sheen ;
Watch them at even when the setting sun
Pours gold upon them ; then they point the way
To struggling hearts for whom the day is done,
And tell them of a blessed, endless day
When nevermore can come the gloomy night,
Nor setting sun can dim the perfect light.

THE PARK.

Wild bit of nature, caged and caught
From out the forest and the meadow sweet,
Worn here and there and matted by the feet
Of romping childhood—beauty dearly bought—
Upon thy leaves the fiery sun has wrought
Its burning havoc, and thy grass lies low,
And all thy flowers that flaunt in gaudy row
Are only aliens, from the greenhouse brought.
Martyr thou art for us and for the souls
That know no better ; who have never seen
The ocean as upon the shore it rolls,

Nor virgin forest with its perfect green ;
And your dead limbs, O trees that stretch on high,
Tell how, to please the hearts of men, ye die.

THE RIVER.

There, through the night, the river floweth still,
Stealing beneath the rumbling roads, and parts
The city, like a death that severs hearts,
With its dread waters gliding black and chill ;
But in the day, when light the world doth fill,
It flows, a band of blue, and sunshine darts
From off its mirrored wave, and joy imparts
To the far vista, where, on rising hill,
From either bank the houses sweep aloft,
And towers go reaching from its blue to where
Another blue above them beckons, there
To lure the wayward world with pleading soft ;
And, dark as death, all night it onward flows,
But red as eastern gold, at sunrise glows.

THE OLD CHURCH.

Here, piled aloft, there rises, stone on stone,
The concrete prayer of ages—all its spires
Pointing us upward when the spirit tires
Of earth and life, and longs for heaven alone.

Here bells are ringing in the crumbling towers,
To mark the soul's long life in briefest hours,
And on the pulsing of the solemn air,
In rays that pierce the deep and holy gloom,
Come all the slumberers from the silent tomb,
Where time has laid them with its gentle care,
And stranded rays of color, rich and deep, '
Affright them as to shadows swift they creep
Among the clustered carvings, where they float
With the last echo of some lingering note.

SUMMER NIGHT.

Night falls upon the city and its homes :
The leaden air comes dusty to the lips
As the sun, sullen, in the distance dips,
And on to other lands, exploring, roams.
The tired toiler thro' the darkness comes,
Seeking a breath of some inconstant air,
Maddened with visions of a seaside fair,
Where ever on the rock the breaker foams.
The sky above, a dusty, shining cloud,
Reflects a million lights that shine below,
And noisy music and the harsh and loud,
Discordant notes of singers come and go,
While weary nature seeks in vain to rest,
Craving a moment of oblivion blest.

SUMMER MORNING.

And morning breaks ; the glory of the night,
With its electric radiance lying low
Over the roof-tops in a hazy glow,
Yields to the majesty of perfect light.
The spires stand darkly out against the sky
And towering buildings veil their staring lines
In the soft light that everything refines,
Or, gloomy, on the red horizon lie ;
Where, hastening, comes the rosy, infant day,
Pink with the radiance of the coming dawn,
The dazzling beauty of the daring morn,
That runs in joy the stealthy night to slay,
And down the silent street its glory streams,
And rouses man from darkness and from dreams.

AUTUMN.

And autumn comes with sweet, sad, smiling face,
And at her touch the woodlands flame and die,
And golden gleams lie on the pale-blue sky,
And soft, faint haze obscures each well-known place ;
For from some unknown world, some faery land,
There drift to us the scents of burning grass,
Of pine and spruce, that ever o'er us pass,
To linger in the distance ; roof-trees stand

Lost in a hazy sea, and all things seem,
In the sweet, golden light that never burns,
Like to a world unknown—a blessed dream
Of all the joys for which the spirit yearns ;
And, silent, in our hearts we long and sigh
For all we love, that ever far doth lie.

AFTER THE SNOW.

The frosty air is perfect. Thou hast caught
Each baleful odor, and, imprisoned, it lies
Locked in thy starry crystals till it dies,
Pierced with a million arrows, thick inwrought
In faery lace-work and in patterns rare.
And now, from miasm free, the perfect air
Glow with a radiant brightness, and its sighs
Come scented, not with May-flower and the rose,
But with the essence that forever blows
Out to the stagnant world from Paradise ;
For, long time baffled, ever driven away
By dust and foulness, now the world is pure,
And lying radiant white, a waxen flower,
It comes to bless us for a passing hour,
And the foul earth a moment to endure ;
While o'er the towering walls the unsullied day
Shines glorious in the flood of perfect light,
Where heaven's blue sky, unmeasured, infinite,



“The war of light against the walls that lie
Below its brightness in sad undertone.”

Lies open, in uncounted leagues, to sight ;
For whose unbounded blue no name is true—
Amethyst, azure, every word must fail
To tell its wonderful and limpid hue,
Tho' lacing limbs of the bare trees would veil
The sky's bright face that ever glances through
The tufted twigs, ice-laden, bent and pale,
That creak and rattle when the winds assail.

DARKNESS AND LIGHT.

So, on the city, as the days go by,
There falls a beauty that is all its own,
And men may gaze and see in it alone
The strife twixt man and the eternal sky ;
The war of light against the walls that lie
Below its brightness in sad undertone,
The struggles of the Titans overthrown,
To gain the golden sky, or fail and die ;
And gazing up to heaven and heaven's clouds blown
Across its blue, its gold, its crimson dye,
The soul may for an hour dark fate defy,
And mock the darkness into evening grown ;
But at the last it turns with tear-dimmed eye,
And all earth's beauty fades into a sigh.

O RUBY FLOWER!

O ruby flower, red-petaled flower,
Thy heavy perfume fills the air,
And drops of crimson, hour by hour,
Fall from thy blossoms fair.

The scents of paradise exhale
From every cluster, as we lie,
Drugged by thy tropic breath, and fail
To realize our misery.

We throb with fevered dreams, or sleep,
In heavy slumber, like the dead,
While miasms from the marshes creep
And float high overhead.

We wake. Ah ! shall we wake again,
And miss the vanished joys of sleep,
And reach despairing arms in vain
From some unfathomed deep ?

Or shall we slumber deeper till
No more we breathe, till heart doth stop,
And in the emerald meadows still
Shall blood-drops from thy blossoms drop ?

TO THE SOUL.

O Soul ! I would I knew thee, what thou art
And whence thou art ; for ever men will rave
About thee, and how best the Soul to save.
Art thou within me, of myself a part ?
Dost thou o'errule me, calm this throbbing heart,
Fluttering thyself 'gainst body's bars, and crave
A something better that's beyond the grave,
Wordless for me, which thou canst not impart ?
Art memory ? Art thou love and hate and fear
And reason and the will and all the mind
That makes us noble ? Wast thou born the year
That I was—on that very day unkind ?
Or hast thou lived for ages, and is life,
To thy scarred self, a lull in endless strife ?

LIMITATION.

I am as one who, in the summer night,
Watches the star of eve shine bright and clear,
Yet deems her silvery radiance all the light
That can be, till a million stars appear.

I am as one to whose defective eyes
All that in distance lies is faint and gray,
Who sees no distant hills, no glowing skies,
But, groping blindly, ever wends his way.

IMMORTALITY.

I.

Sometimes I try to think what life would seem
Were it dissevered from the links of time
And transferred to some cloudless, perfect clime,
Without a memory of this troubled dream—
The loves, the hates, the hopes, even the fears,
That thrill us, gone forever, and no trace
Of all their quavering music in the place
Where we must spend an endless round of years.
Could I be I, and miss them, yet pursue
My new career, an immortal, yet the same
Who on the earth, from youth to age, once grew
And bore a part in all its pride and shame?
Would it be Life, this Life, that throbs in me?
Give it some other name, not Immortality.

II.

Not this I long for, but for quiet years,
Like the best hours of life ; that sweetest hour
That lingers, clinging, when in grief we cower.
Even give me all—the madness and the tears—
If thou, O fate, hast nothing else to give
Than a pale, exiled life ; if faces dear,
That I have lived among and cherished here,

Must vanish, give me this same life to live,
And call *it* "Heaven," and I will take and bless
Thy hand for giving, drain the bitter hours
As medicine, and welcome, as thy caress,
The golden moments, the few fading flowers,
That in youth's springtime for a day abide,
And glint, like stars, by autumn's brown way-side.

"FOR SO HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED."

"For so he giveth his beloved, sleeping."
Tho' waking hours be filled with pain and care,
In the still night they rest, wearied with weeping,
And float in dreams thro' heavenly regions rare.

Ever he giveth to the soul that sorrows
The dear companions who are lost and fled ;
Around they throng, in dreams the spirit borrows
Them from the storehouse of the silent dead.

The dear ones come, the dreams grow bright and
vivid ;
Life with them seems like the real life of old.
No doubts assail, no fears, no sorrows livid,
Come to debase those hours of perfect gold.

Only an hour, but, oh ! how sweet the hour,
Tho' sad the waking when the morning breaks,
Leaving in claspèd hand not even a flower,
Faded and wan, to cheer the heart that aches.

Yet this " he giveth his beloved, sleeping."
One glimpse again of faces lost and fair,
One blossom in the desert, one hope, keeping
The lonely heart that sorrows, from despair.

DREAMS.

When dreams come thronging down the gates of
 night
To join us in that wild, uncanny land
Whose name and place we may not understand,
Till we, beyond life's boundary, rise to light,
What souls are these we meet, and, joyful, see
Thro' closèd eyes, as heart to heart we greet,
Spurning the real with wingèd, tireless feet,
And floating on in fairy-land heart free ?
What roads unknown we traverse in a breath,
What nameless oceans rolling blue below,
What realms ? Are they beyond thy shores, O
 Death ?
And shall we ever dwell in them, and know,

When, spurning the lost earth, we rise and float
In endless singing, on some perfect note ?

What souls are these ? Are they indeed the shades
And phantoms of the living and the dead
Who wander on the night when life is fled,
Sleeping by day, rousing when sunlight fades ;
And do our inmost selves, in ghostly guise,
Go out to meet them in the land of dreams,
And wander on by fabled woods and streams
That only in imagination have their rise ?
Is every scene the passing fancy draws,
Is every character the mind portrays,
Created and made real by unknown laws,
And into space sent wandering on its ways ?
Are real and feignèd things the same if we
From human limitations were set free ?

DOWN THRO' THE DESOLATE PLACES.

Shall I ever again hear you calling ;
Your voice, on the silent night, falling
On my dying ear, thrills of hope giving,
When I fade from life and the living,
Down thro' the infinite spaces,
Down thro' the desolate places ?

Will you call to me then in the night,
To me praying for help and for light ;
Will you reach my soul with your crying,
The soul of me, hopelessly dying,
Down thro' the measureless spaces,
Down in the desolate places ?

Shall I answer your cry thro' the blackness,
Shall I grope for you on thro' the trackless
Depths and abysses of being,
Hope from me endlessly fleeing,
On thro' the infinite spaces,
On thro' the desolate places ?

Heart, even now are you crying,
Lonely and lost, yet undying,
Sobbing and crying and calling,
Your dear voice answerless falling
Down through the measureless spaces,
Down thro' the desolate places.

WHAT HEAVEN MAY BE.

Cease, mourning spirit, cease thy cry ;
What carest thou what end to thee befall ?
Doth not the living world them blessed call
Who in their budding wither low and die ?

If we know nothing, when in death we lie,
We miss the sorrows of the tiresome years ;
We miss the joys, but missing, too, the tears,
Into oblivion we may gladly fly.
Is it for hearts we long that hold us fast ?
Is it to faces dear we cling and cleave ?
Is it for loving glances that we grieve ?
They all must fail us in the end at last ;
For in the brightest heaven could ever beam
These could not greet us, as men fondly dream.

The mother longs to see her darling child
From whom relentless death swept her away ;
The child, to manhood grown, yet never may
Show the sweet face that once her love beguiled.
The man, with years of life, now bent and gray,
Mourns the fond heart that cheered him for a while,
Missing, tho' lost in youth, the loving smile
That faded long ago in death's decay ;
And ages cling to ages gone, who long
Ever with the same longing, and who cry,
" Grant us to see our dear ones when we die."
And all creation, in one maddened throng,
Would cluster in the heaven, and seek one spot,
And search, with tears, for what, alas, was not.

Why may our longing not foretell the hour
When all we long for, we may have and hold,

When poverty may bathe in boundless gold,
And lovers know love's everlasting power?
For fond Imagination, now so weak,
Grown great within us to a mighty force,
May be the blest creator and the source
Of all the rich fruition that we seek.
Could dreams come true and fancies live and grow,
And make a world in which we lived and moved,
What endless pleasures through our lives might flow,
Encircling us with all we fondly loved.
Then souls would find, in lives beyond the grave,
All the bright things they agonized to have.

Then, to the arms that reach, would gladly fly
The lost and loved, sweet as they were when life
Wrested them from us—children dear, and wife,
And parents, and old friends, as now they lie
Deep in our memories, and the scenes we saw,
The homes we lived in, aye, and distant lands,
To which, in life, we vainly stretched our hands,
Brought all together by a mighty law.
All things we long for and the flowers that fade
Upon the earth, made deathless and more sweet,
And sunlight, and the perfect evening shade,
And mountains to be climbed with tireless feet,
And oceans, and the distant stars brought near,
Up to whose far-off fires we gazed in longing here.

So heaven might be ; tho' logic prove anew,
Ten thousand times, that all such hope is vain,
Yet will the hope return and still remain,
And the soul's instinct in the end come true.
Somewhere, somehow, we yet may live and claim
The hearts we loved, the scenes we longed to see,
When from the body's chains we leap, set free,
And leave behind our sorrows and our shame.
Somewhere, somehow, the promise in the heart
May blossom in fulfilment ; we may own,
In a blest life beyond, a blessed part,
Reaping in joy the grain in sorrow sown,
And heaven be ours, and throngs of happy years
Made brighter by the shadow of our fears.

And long ago, at dawn of history's day,
Where yellow Ganges swept toward the sea,
Or in the jungle, or beneath the tree
Made sacred by the one who taught "the way,"
The men whom we deem children thought and
 strove

With the deep problems of another life,
When the soul dies to earth and all its strife,
Entering the unknown realms of hate or love.
This, their solution of the problem old,
This is their answer to the hearts that seek,
Coming to us, when faith we held grows cold,

When life is sadness and when death is bleak ;
Tell us, O theologian proud and sure,
Is thy belief more certain to endure?

“HE THAT LOSETH HIS LIFE SHALL
FIND IT.”

When I have lost my life,
And a new one comes in its glory,
Can it bring to my soul
The joy I found in the old ?
Shall I never lament
For the lost life's pitiful story,
Saddening, as centuries roll,
In a world that is silent and cold ?

When I have found my life,
Will it ever be worth the finding ?
Will the hearts that are near
Seem to me fond as my own ?
Or shall I wither in fear,
In the glare of its glory blinding,
Missing the sweet and the dear
In a life that is splendid and lone ?

SIN.

As in our dreams we suffer sin and shame,
And wake in terror with their dreadful load,

Finding ourselves the same—the same abode,
And stainless hands and an unsullied name—
So may the soul that wakes from earth and death
Into the life that is the perfect day,
Drop from its naked form its sins away,
And rise unsullied from its dying breath;
For life and time are but the dreams of man,
And death and timeless ages wait us there,
And, measureless beside our little span,
Stretch, in the future, countless æons fair,
And mortal sins may mortal be, and die
With the loved forms that only mouldering lie.

DEATH.

And if we sleep? If souls go out and die,
As soft notes die upon the evening air,
And if we fade and wither like a sigh,
As fade the flowers that are so wondrous fair,
Why should we grieve? The life we lose was sweet,
Or it was bitter—good to have or lose;
And sleep comes soft, and no man may refuse
The summons when he hears its stealthy feet.
And if it lead us through the dark, blindfold,
To where, we know not; still the hour may come
When, with our eyes unbound, we may behold

Whatever waits—a prison or a home ;
Or will it lead, still on, with fainter tread,
Into some voiceless land, and leave us—dead ?

THE NARROW GATE.

Hardly shall they
Who riches have
Heaven enter in ;
Its gates are thronged
With all the wronged
And sinners stained with sin.

Hardly shall they
Who live in pride
Heaven enter in,
But lowly heart
Shall ne'er depart,
Failing its gate to win.

“LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH.”—*Proverbs.*

How can we know thy strength,
O Death, or how can we
Limit thy power,
If limit be
Beyond the might we feel, yet cannot see ?

Love we can know—
Love, with his tender arms
Enfolding—Love, that's blind—
Shielding us from the harms
Befalling humankind.

But in the infinite to be,
When no more draw we breath,
But in the darkness lie
Under thine arm, O Death,
Can Love still strive with thee?

Is there, beyond the world,
Of Love still need,
Or dost thou ever take heed;
And dost thou spare, even there,
Him for whom Love doth plead?

Are deadly battles fought
Out in the dark, the world above,
And war, with Love arrayed,
And thou, O Death, dismayed,
Yielding before the mighty arm of Love?

Leaving thy destined prey, all scarred and faint,
In Love's own arms,
Revived by Love's glad tears,
Stripped of its fears,
And free from thy restraint?

Do we draw daily breath
In sufferance, 'scape thy darts,
Since Love for us has wrought,
And held back from our blindly-beating hearts
Thy sword, O Death?

And can Love fail?
For Love is strong as death,
And never can Death stronger be and slay
Love, our defender, he
Who is our help alway.

SEEK YE ABOVE.

"Seek ye above."
The words were graven deep
On lofty column's base
Which heavenward rose,
And lost itself,
In a confused sweep
Of clustered capitals,
In the dim close;
And arches piled on arches
Took their flight
Across dark spaces,
Where the light
Fell thro' the Gothic windows,

Tinged with rays
Prismatic, in their iridescent blaze.

And many a man
Had pondered, looking long
Upon the legend ;
Cast his eyes above,
And striven to find
Some secret plan,
And half divined,
The builder bold,
Daring, but sure,
Had hidden untold gold
Aloft in nook secure.

But some were bolder,
And with pick and bar,
Mounting the wall,
Engaged in deadly war
Against the solid stone,
Till it, indignant grown,
Came with a mighty crash,
All overthrown,
And lay in ruin dire ;
While with the fall
Sunlight streamed in again ;
But still the shaft rose higher

Among the ruins, fair and tall,
And cried, as the bright air it clove,
"Seek ye above!"

DOUBT.

Mountain that blocks the pathway of a soul,
The shadow of whose threatening peaks
Against the sun of evening, seeks
Its gloomy shade over a life to roll,
Could I but move thee, and in yonder sea
Cast thee into its dread abysmal deep
And journey on my way, forever free,
Then would my soul with faith exultant leap ;
But, heart that doubts, faithless humanity,
Heart that dreads failure, heart that will not heed,
Sinking in doubt before yon tossing sea,
The evening shadows o'er thee faster speed,
And still thy feet must climb, where the road winds,
Up the steep hill-side, yet no pathway finds.

ILLUSION.

Am I a dream, a vision of the night,
Flitting thro' mighty mind in hours of rest ;
Am I a gleaming mote, now in the light,
But doomed to sink upon the earth's dark breast?

Am I a faint reflection, idly cast
Upon the bosom of a fathomless lake,
Which can a transient, passing moment last,
And then to nothing in the waters break?

Am I a shadow, while the substance sure,
That casts me on the earth a moment short,
Lives on and moves in being, all secure,
Tho' in a moment I must come to naught?

Am I a whisper of some mighty wind
That ever blows around the universe,
Or but the brief creation of a mind
That passing moods reverse?

Am I a sparklet from some mighty orb
That ever pours its endless jets of light
Out to the infinite, which will absorb
Them in the boundless bosom of its night?

And are the stars above, the visible world,
But a phantasmal miragery that throbs
Above some endless desert, to be whirled
To nothingness, when the sirocco sobs?

And is the real the invisible, which stands
When worlds and men have lived and passed away,
That knows no earth and sea, nor any lands
But the enduring land of perfect day?

THE PRAYER OF AGES.

“O Baal, hear us ;” we have prayed and striven
Thro’ the long hours, longing for light,
And the faint spark that thou to us hast given,
Flickering, goes out in night.

All that we have thou oft before hast taken—
First-born of man and of the brute below ;
We gave our riches, with our faith unshaken.
’Tis thee we seek, ’tis thee we long to know.

Is it in vain, O Baal, that we have given
Reason and all the powers that now are ours ?
Is it in vain that we with doubt have striven ?
Taking the fruit, wilt thou pluck all the flowers ?

Is it in vain that we have watched the dying,
Seen all our children slowly fade and fall,
Weeping, not murmuring, but in patience sighing,
“Thou gavest and takest all.”

We gave them all ; the babes to us outreaching
Their little arms in vain with frightened cry.
We turn aside, nor answer them, beseeching,
As thou hast turned from us and let us die,

What dost thou answer, Baal, to our crying?
With straining ear we listen, but in vain;
Echo comes back, in thousand echoes dying,
Unto our cries of pain.

For now, perchance, our lord is only sleeping,
Or thro' the distant sky is flying fast,
Holding high court in constellations, keeping
His great abode in realms boundless and vast;

And from his sky, starlit, and us appalling,
No voice doth answer as the hours fly,
Only our echoes, back unto us falling,
As, in our anguish and despair, we die.

AN EPITAPH.

So, like a scent the wind wafts from the rose,
To us he came, and on the breeze he passed
Up to the boundless spaces of the sky,
To be diffused, yet garnered safely there,
Where lingering light is, and the faintest note
Of every melody that dies away
From our dull ears, and soars and soars aloft,
To vie with angels in their heavenly choirs;
Where every thought that's blessed rises high,

Thro' the thin ether, up to God above,
And is received there on the pageless book
That tells for eyes divine our lives and loves ;
Wherein no evil enters, nor the thoughts
That flame with cruelty and wrong, for these,
Down to abysmal depths, sink beyond sight,
And float, a noisome cloud, o'er hell's dark world.

BEYOND THE SILENT STARS.

Beyond the silent stars,
Where last the sun did set
In dreamy bars
Of softest violet ;
Beyond the east, where sun doth rise
In rosy rays on drowsy eyes ;
Beyond the ebon night,
Pierced thro' with infinite light ;
Beyond the measureless blue,
Where rides the sun its circle through ;
Beyond the din of life,
Into the stillness infinite,
Where no regret can come, nor tangled cares
Weave us into their meshes unawares ;
Beyond the strife of troubled life,
We cry to thee.

THE GHOST

I.

Unto the spirit, worn with earth, but free
From all the ties of life, the electric air,
The endless space, the universe, lies wide,
Where it must find a home or homeless be.
For space, unmeasured space, which ever grows
Into the endless, is a realm unbound
For spirit, which itself hath neither length,
Nor breadth, nor thickness, so that millions, gone
From off the earth, might people worlds so small,
That to our mortal eye a point they seem,
Yet dwell at ease, in mansions built so vast,
Beyond the thought that's human, that the world
And sun and planets—yea, the mighty stars
That drift in milky strands across our sky—
Might be the rude foundations of the wall,
The clustered pillars, or the uncounted stones
That are piled up into the mighty fane
Where dwells the spirit who controls us all.
No time to live in and no place required,
And all the all to people with the dreams
That once were men and women, and no sound
To rudely echo, and no light, where eyes,
In the vast loss of all things that we prize,

Are gone forever ; and shall the thought remain—
The thought that makes beyond the yawning grave
All that is left that we can call “ ourselves ? ”
The thought, the chain of recollection faint,
The passions and desires that find no field,
The loves that meet no lover, and the pains
That find no members, senses, to shrink back,
Nor voice to cry in outraged agony ?
And if the world of thought, like the round world
Of matter that we leave, be also lost,
Then are we vanished, shades that fade and pine,
That know not why they moan, that hear no cry,
Even their own, can recollect no loss,
Have no bright hope, own nothing, but must drift
Like to dry leaves, whither the winds of force—
The mighty currents of an unseen world—
Hurry them ever onward. What are we,
In this brief life so careless of the hours,
So heedless of the sun and sky and dawn,
And gentle evening and the ringing song,
And heart of love, that makes the heart of life,
To scorn the moments that may never come
Back to our weary hearts when life is gone.

II.

Formless and chill I flutter round the world,
Nor can I clearly now remember what

My name was in the happy days I lived,
Nor can I see, nor hear ; nor is there sun,
Or sound, to break the darkness and the still
And deadly silence that doth wrap me round.
Yet ever on me hangs a weary load
Of some forgotten wrong I did to men,
Of some neglected task I failed to do,
Or some o'erhanging danger on the heads
Of those who once to me were close and dear ;
And thro' the night I strive to find their place,
And fancy I am near them. Then I throw
All the wan power that's left me into act,
And urge my being on to assume the shape
That once was mine, when I was once a man.
I am a thought, a whisper in the night ;
I am a breath, a recollection vague ;
I am a will without the power to do—
No patient limbs to bear me where I would ;
I am an eyeless, earless, senseless ghost,
That wanders on the chill and bitter wind,
That strives to reach the homes of human life,
And flies, reluctant, ever against its will,
To haunt the moss-grown tombs, to float and fade,
To linger in the damp, neglected shade
Of ruined dwellings, far from busy life ;
Yet ever strive I, thro' my lonely night,
To tell some tale I know not, speak some word

By me forgotten, give some warning vague
Of unknown danger, so that I, in death,
Wander forever round the haunts of life,
Warring against my fate thro' weary years.

III.

Thro' space I roam,
A ghost, all desolate,
Seeking, but never finding home.
Eyeless, the sun is blotted out,
And now—the sense of touch without—
I cannot tell if he shines on
My tenuous form, my features wan,
Or if I likeness have to what
I once was, but, alas ! am not.
Earless, the stillness broken by no sound,
Silence eternal wrapping me around,
No place, nor form, nor solid world,
But by wild gust invisible ever hurled
Hither and thither ; even a brain
I have no longer, nor doth there remain
Of all its hard-earned stores a single word,
A line ; nor know I what, perchance, occurred
A year, a day ago ; but the vague sense
That something once was—ever the intense,
The recurring thought that here am I,
In ever-living, hopeless misery.

No food I crave, yet craving everything,
From wanting all things, still I cling
To a lost something ; reach and strive in vain
In the vast emptiness where I remain,
To grasp a shadow, which I ever miss,
And headlong fall thro' some unknown abyss.
Time is not. Yesterday seems far away,
And misty years are but as yesterday.
I move my hands adown me, seek to find
What shape remains to me, senseless and blind ;
But touch is gone, the empty spaces fly,
As voiceless, soundless, through the dark I cry,
" Thus will ye be when ye shall come to die."

THE WORLD-SONG.

I.

Can it be true that every sob,
That every pitiful low moan
From stricken heart,
That every cry from souls alone,
That every throb, is but a part
Of one vast undertone,
Blending in perfect harmony,
Somewhere, with notes of joy ?

II.

Can ear divine, above the rush
And shock of conflict, sorrow-drowned,
In some eternal, perfect hush,
Still hear earth's music loud resound?
We miss our place; the heavenly bars
And lines are waiting till we find;
We wander on, like wandering stars
Or snowflakes driven by the wind,
But ever wait, tho' time be late,
The chorus till we take our place,
And sing, before some golden gate,
The pæan of a long-lost race.

III.

Fear not to sing, heart faint with doubt,
Nor shrink, dismayed, from discord sharp;
A myriad notes wait yet, without,
To float from some supernal harp;
For hands divine shall tune the strings,
And golden fingers strike the chord,
And, borne through space on flying wings,
Shall soar the music and the word,
And distant stars shall join and vie,
Singing the song that cannot die.

IV.

Song of the world, I cannot hear
Thy melody, while harsh and loud
Resound the cries of hate and fear
From the discordant, warring crowd ;
But faint and far, and, oh ! how sweet,
There steals into some listening ear,
In blessed moments, all too fleet,
The world-song, ringing loud and clear.

ON THE HILL.

I.

My home stands proudly on the highest hill,
Of scores that lift their rounded tops on high,
And o'er it softest winds, with sweetest sigh,
Linger and die when storms are lulled and still ;
With treasures from the world my rooms I fill,
Hiding the tinted wall with landscape sweet
And bits of life, while underneath my feet
Are tawny skins of creatures that I kill ;
But down below me, in the valley hot,
Lies a great city, filled with toiling men,
And little children, stunted with the strife
That I, in my more happy home, know not ;
But ever visions rise to accuse me when
I would enjoy the sweets that fill my life.

Here roses grow, for me alone they blow,
And violets hide and daisies nod and turn
Up to me as their sun, and yet I spurn
Their beauty ; for my heart in shame doth know
That down beneath me, in the vale below,
There grow no flowers nor grass, but burning street
Echoes forever to uncessant feet
That shrink and falter in its blinding glow,

And from the windows glance the eyes of care,
And at the hungry looms men stand and weave,
And smile when, at the most, their hands can grasp,
From what they earn, a trifling, meagre share ;
Can I go down the grassy road at eve,
And meet them, and their toil-stained fingers clasp?

II.

What can I say ? How can I show my love,
While yet I cling to all the things I have ?
Shall I go sell my all, and haste to save
The souls below, leaving my heights above ?
Go down, and leave my breeze to blow in vain,
My flowers to bloom where none can see their grace,
And live among my brothers, in the place
Where all is wrapped in misery and pain ?
Will all my sacrifice and all my loss—
Deeper by worlds for these dear sweets I know—
Be understood by those who, hopeless, toss
Despairing arms to me from far below,
Or will they turn them, in their mad disdain,
And bid me climb my breezy hill again ?

For I am alien, and suspicions hide
My pure desire from those I long to bless,
And in the shadows of their hopelessness
The doubt and fear of ignorance reside ;

For, if I toil, I rob the rest of bread,
And if I give, they view me but as one
Who finds complaisance in a duty done,
Or in their hearts there lurks a spectre red
That cries, "It all is ours ; he but gives back
To those he robbed a trifle from his store ;
All should belong to us, who all things lack.
We take thy dole as owners, claiming more."
And, in my doubt, I pause, and pausing, stay
Among my breezes and my flowers away.

ON THE STREETS.

Will you let me breathe the air ?
Can I drink of the river's flow,
Stooping and quenching there
My thirst, even when you know
That the water is bought and sold
And its flood is coined to gold ?

Can I shiver in winter's blast,
Drawing my rags around
My freezing limbs and cast
Myself on some vacant ground,
Even though I be but a blot
On some priceless building lot ?

Can I eat when hunger cries ?
Can I beg for a crust from your hand,
While food flaunts before my eyes,
In its arrogance, when I stand
Before the flashing light
Of the bakery, in the night ?

Is all yours and nothing mine ?
May I slowly and carefully walk
On the streets that are broad and fine,
If I promise you not to talk ?
For my voice is harsh and loud,
And my words might draw the crowd.

Take my life—you have all beside—
If it's mine to give or keep ;
For I find no place to hide,
Nor a hovel in which to creep,
And you dare not say, " Go find
Honest work, you lazy hind !"

I have sought, but never found ;
I have tried, but ever failed ;
I have gone an endless round,
And my cheeks have thinned and paled ;
But the shops and the mills are filled,
And, O God, my heart is chilled !

For the world is owned by men
Who have all, and leave no space
For an outcast brother when
He drops from his only place,
And over his head there rolls
An ocean of struggling souls.

THE PRIDE OF WESTERN LANDS.

Pearl of the world, thou perfect womanhood,
Stately and pure and versed in all the ways
That make life lovely with ideal days ;
Yet all your sweetness, that we find so good,
Is possible, because, in darkest maze,
A thousand sisters, famished, strive for food.
Your leisure springs from endless hours of care,
Your sweetness, from the bitterness that wells
Over them in a surge of dark despair ;
Your purity, the sinless look you wear,
Your beauty, your enticing world of spells,
Your rapt devotion's hours, are passion's flowers,
That bloom upon a seething dunghill, where
Millions, your sisters, fester on in crime,
And piteous life they keep your toil to spare,
That you may have your hours of idle time.
Your brilliant speech, the sparkle of your mind,

Your eyes so deep o'er which your lovers rave,
Are possible because, grown old and blind
By nights of toil, they hurry to the grave,
And while they struggle on with trembling hands,
Ye pose, serene, the pride of western lands.

PALMISTRY.

Oh, let me see that hand so small, so fine
In all its curves, long-fingered, soft and smooth,
Nor draw it hastily away, forsooth,
Before I may thy coming fate divine ;
For as I scan thy palm, each little line,
Crossing its rosy firmness and its white,
Telleth to me a story that would fright,
And of thy fate gives many an ominous sign.
Yet shrink not, fear not, for my lips will tell
No awesome story unto thee of days
To come upon thee ; all with thee is well
If only we together wend our ways.
Give me thy hand ; thy dreaded fate be mine,
And with my hand, thy hand for life entwine.

HISTORY.

Weaver of fables of the olden time,
Raconteur of the ages, all thy tales



Palmistry.

Are threaded on one strand, in words that rhyme
With only war, and death, and dying wails.

Stories of cruelty, of blood and lust,
Of victories blazoned on thy livid page,
Of brutal hearts who to destruction thrust
The gentle and the poor in every age.

We weary of thy sameness ; tell anew
Some story that will light the weeping eye.
Alas ! thou knowest none ; there are so few.
Kings come and conquer, and at last *they* die.

Hast thou no word for all the silent throngs
Who lived, to fall before the victor's sword,
Who languished in their prisons and their thongs ?
Why silent ? History tells of these no word.

But of the victor, of the king who ruled
O'er quaking hearts, who carved his mighty name
High up above the millions that he fooled,
Thou tellest all the glory, not the shame.

DRIFTWOOD.

Floating upon Time's tide and cast ashore
Upon the world we know in modern day,
Come, piece by piece, the wrecks of ages gone,

Drifted to us by storms of centuries ;
For years, in tens of thousands, on have sped,
And men and nations flourished and are dead ;
And these, their relics, sought with eager eye
And treasured up as history's jewelry,
Are all we have to tell us what men were—
A tattered page of parchment ; papyri,
Rolled under many a fold on bosom brown
That throbbed in Egypt ; stones, with letters cut
By hand of man, and marred by hand of time ;
And ancient weapons, and the hammered gold
That ringed the brows of monarchs, mighty once
While yet they lived, and serving them, when dead,
To prove the story of their wondrous stores.
While in the sands of what was once the sea,
In ages so remote that mortal man,
Even at best, is an ephemeral thing
That lives in history's sunshine ; there we find
Whole nations buried, and the desert sand
Has blown o'er granite shaft and palace grand,
And smoothed the world for man to start again,
And live a new career ; and thoughtlessly
He builds his cities high and sinks his shafts ;
But when his toiling spade turns up the soil,
He breaks the vase that ages laid away,
And crushes through, with busy pick, the skull
That once was filled with fancies like his own,

And planned and plotted—aye, and carried out—
Its plans to grand fulfilment, and he stands
Silent in stark amazement, for the New
Is but Eld revived, and there and then
He finds him face to face with nobler men,
And all his fancied greatness, all his skill,
Dwarfs in the grandeur of the dead and still ;
And tracing, step by step, the road they trod,
He grows more humble as he sees how they
Dealt with the mighty problem of the world,
And wrestled with the mysteries that enfold
All that is human, and he knows that he,
With all his progress and his thought acute,
Can tell no more than those lips lying mute.

WHEN WARS SHALL CEASE.

Man prehistoric, glorying in the fight
Waged for thy fireside and thy guarded cave—
Own brother to the wolf, the bear, the fox,
And bearing, as thy standard, likeness rude
Of these, thy kinsmen, giving mystic power,
In thine imagination, to the pack
Of wild and savage creatures—how are we
Wiser in this our day than thou in thine ?
For still we carry on our banners gay,
And still we raise upon our standards high,

The old devices, grown more monstrous still,
From origin enwrapped in mystery ;
And round them all we rally in the fight,
And up to them in peace, we, loving, gaze,
And oft we weep when, in some foreign land,
We see, by chance, the emblem of our own ;
For flags we cherish, flags we madly wave,
Flags we fight for, and under, and obey
The sovereign of the flag, as though he be
Some distant god of awful majesty.
Yet flags will have their day, and some time may
In dust and cold neglect be laid away,
When nations coalesce and banners fuse
Their emblems, and the teeming people grow
Greater in number, but with fewer names,
Till time at last shall roll them into one
And join the world of men together, when
The last great nation shall absorb the least,
And stand alone, triumphant, gorged and full ;
Then but one flag will wave ; no alien hand
Shall live to lift another, and the gale
Of war, that flags blow out in, cease to blow,
And the lone flag hang moveless in the air
Unnoticed. Storms shall wear it, hanging there,
And dampness mould and sunlight fade its thread,
Till it is but a rag, left dun and dead.
But none will miss the flag ; almighty time

Shall sweep away its uses ; progress grand
Shall overwhelm with death the small device
That, for the ten thousand years, has served to rive
And keep asunder man from fellow-man.
For flags, and alien tongues, and nations' pride,
And all the wave of deadliest hate that flows
'Twixt race and race, shall sink into a calm,
Upon an ocean, ruled by one alone,
And reaching, filled with peace, from pole to pole.
Nor could we find, in that blest day, a cause
Why flags should be, save when the mind of man,
Spanning, in coming time, the vast abyss
That stretches from the nearest star to this,
Shall fire with warlike ardor 'gainst the stars,
And brandish high earth's blazing flag towards Mars.

“ MY PEACE I GIVE.”

The world, with arms uplifted, cries to him
Whose very name, “ The Prince of Peace,” is dear,
Whose promise to their hearts is ever near,
Ruling the might of shining seraphim,
But not “ to send you peace,” he, parting, said,
“ As the world giveth,” but the dagger red
And the stained sword, piercing the martyr's breast,
All these, and after, “ my beloved rest.”

A CONSERVATIVE'S PLAINT.

“Conservative!” I was born so. Conservative
I’ll be
Till I die; I still say, “No modern change for me.”
For I was born too late, or early, before the froth
Of newness from this modern world wore off.
I hate the rush of life, the bells, the noise
Of a world wild with new mechanic toys.
The alertness now demanded is too great;
It wears my nerves out, I was born too late.
There was some peace an hundred years ago,
But in another, what? Well, God may know;
But I look for a silence, absolute,
When man has lost his hearing—his acute
And active senses dulled and evolved
By gongs and bells and whistles ever tooted;
And when his eyes have given out trying to see
The truth in a world glaring with electricity.
Even the way of thinking knocks me out
With all its fad of “Criticism” and doubt;
The old views all exploded, Socialism,
And single tax now, and the gorgeous prism
Of colors evanescent, Communism;
When, if they have their way, cut work-hours down,
We all can live in villas out of town,

And come in once a year and spend an hour
On some artistic task, by electric power.
They haven't spared the Bible or the Creed,
Or Ten Commandments, when they twenty need
To keep men straight and in some better order,
With all our social and political disorder.
The old ways were enough for me ; the light
Of gas and candle brightened up *my* night
Sufficiently to read by ; but now, speed
Is the one thing, and nobody takes heed
Who is run over. Infancy and age
Go down, alike, before our new-born rage.
Get there in time, no matter whom you crush.
Hospitals everywhere ; if, in the awful rush,
The victims of our scramble chance go under,
The surgeon, ready, saws you quick asunder,
Or puts together, or restores lost members,
Or fans the spark of your expiring embers.
I loved religion ; 'twas so satisfying,
So good to rest on when it came to dying.
You can't rest on philosophy securely ;
Marcus Aurelius did, but somewhat poorly ;
But we can't all be Romans, and this science,
It seems to me, is a pretty poor reliance.
It tells nothing we want to know, but only
About antiquity, and makes me lonely,
Babbling about survival. If we all die,

Being run over, as we faster fly,
How will the last survivor feel, the fit one,
Who lived it out when all the rest were gone?
And there's Selection and Ancestral Traits,
And theories of Heredity; it grates
Upon a mind like mine to hear men chatter,
As tho' the whole affair were any matter.
For I have traits that must have far descended
From several thousand years back, somewhat
 blended,
But all agreed on one point: I had rather,
Than be my grandchild, be my old grandfather.

IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

I do not think that I should care to live
When science still more scientific grows,
And new inventions by the thousand give
To coming men a thousand new-found woes;
When overhead the bandits of the air
Fly in their wide-winged craft, and, hovering high,
Jeer at the crowded city lying there,
Below them, by their science doomed to die,
When shot and shell can fly an hundred miles,
And burst, all unforeseen, and ruin spread,
Where, but a breath before, all lips with smiles

Were wreathed, that in a moment more are dead ;
Or when some wondrous mind's inventive skill
Discovers—what we almost have—the power,
With a malignant death a world to kill
In one brief anguished hour ;
Or when the thoughts that now we hold concealed
Within our hearts are widely open laid,
And all things are to every one revealed,
And every secret to the world betrayed ;
When every passing word we speak is writ
By mechanism working far away,
And every sky by night is brightly lit
With light more fierce than ever shadeless day ;
For in that awful hour that soon must come
The power of evil hearts will leap to be
More deadly, until up to heaven's high dome
Man rules supreme—a bad divinity.

O PROBLEM !

O Problem, still unsolved,
Recurring oft
In wakeful nights,
In days of sharp distress,
When thought becomes involved,
And all the soft

And fond delights
Of earth seem valueless,

How can we solve
Or how thine answer find
For ever living,
Or for death that parts?
Thoughts may revolve
And faiths grow blind,
None giving
Comfort unto our seeking hearts.

O Problem old,
O riddle never guessed,
O daring quest,
Inscrutable, yet ever sought,
Our hands we fold
Upon our breast;
For from our seeking we shall surely rest
When all our wars are fought.

TEACH ME, O FLOWER.

Teach me, O flower ;
My soul to learn is slow,
Yet doth it know
That hidden in thy heart,
Nor wide displayed,
Tho' rich arrayed,
There lies, this hour,
A secret thou didst grow
But to impart.

Teach me, O flower ;
Life's meaning lies in thee,
Man's destiny,
The hope he'll miss or find,
Hid safe away,
Where ages may
Roll o'er thee, many an hour,
Before thy mystery
Is all divined.

THE SPIRIT AND THE FLOWER.

For him opens at day each beauteous gate,
With colors spread, in tints that live but here ;
In vivid tones, or delicate and faint,

So lovely that no human art can paint
Color like theirs ; for though he come anear,
The artist fails, wrapt with delight so great,
At what his soul sees, but his hand cannot create.

The wondrous lines in curves of beauty fall,
Each perfect form striving to ever tell
The homeless wanderer to come in and rest
His soul, that aches for life, on dazzling breast,
While to his ear, entranced, faint melodies well
That to his wavering spirit sigh and call,
And all his sense, in sleep and dreams, enthrall.

And honeyed sweets and perfumes that betray
The sense till judgment falters and is lost ;
The nodding, waving motion of them all,
And blandishments that ever louder call,
O'erwhelm him, once the threshold he has crossed,
Till no more wends he on his desolate way,
But enters into woe and wills to stay.

LIFE.

If *our* life be the one great end and aim
Of all the life that throbs upon the earth,
And if that life be the poor child of shame
That we have thought it, with its sin-doomed birth,

Tell us why life o'erflows with laughter? Why
It revels in the beautiful, and creeps
Over the ugly things that fade and die
And hides their horror; why it joyful leaps
High on the rock, beyond man's daring tread,
And blossoms in the snowdrift; flashes bright
Where none can see it in the dingle's shade,
Or opens out its beauty to the night
Where none admire it; doomed to faint and fade
When morn comes? Why the world, from earth
to sky,
Is filled with beauty—one vast, glorious song
Of tone and color, shape and symmetry,
Which to the universal life alone belong,
Till land and sea cry out, and the wide air,
With the one deathless word they all declare,
“Love,” that is life, and life that meaneth breath;
That comes and goes in matter, scorning Death.

NATURE.

In countless ways the all-pervading power
That waits behind the painted scenes of earth,
Shapes and reshapes its handiwork, yet all
Are but the changes rung on one design;

Temples of life, to draw the heedless in ;
Gateways to being, builded great and small,
Gilded with all the colors of the light
That, blended, forms the sunbeam and the stars ;
Shapes so fantastic that the mind can grasp
No idea of a form that nature missed ;
Yet are they all but variations rare
Of one device, none other ; for the world
Is but one temple, one vast gate of life,
And all the tinsel trappings do but hide
The shrine, where he who enters does the will
Of the great power that in the silence strives
Ever to live in all these varied lives.

BACILLI.

For you no kindly power, with loving art,
Adorns and shapes, with beauty rare, each form.
Beneath the eye of man, in unseen part,
Ye, in the darkness of the infinite, swarm.
Everywhere, alway, in the calm or storm,
Within the living, waiting there the hour
When ye shall rise triumphant and o'erpower,
Within the dead, where carnival ye keep,
Ever invading as ye steal and cower,
Till, on some sultry wind, ye to your carnage leap.

Are ye, then, life? Like flowers and painted things
That poise in sunshine on their gilded wings,
That hum the note that louder still doth float,
Leaping heavenward, from the palpitating throat
Of every bird that skyward soars and sings?

Or are ye death, the desolate and drear,
Ever surrounding us with legions vast;
Evading sight, lurking in guilty fear
Where never can unaided glance be cast?
Are ye the silent foe of that blest power
Who, for us, works unceasing day, and night,
That hides from us its majesty and might
Within the blushing petals of the flower?
And in the future, will the untiring hand
That builds again each shattered house of clay,
Conqueror, before death's flying legions stand,
And claim for all that lives a deathless day?

MATER DOLOROSA.

We torture thee, O Mother Nature dear,
Knowing thy heart, that beats in every heart,
Feels of each pang the bitter, burning smart,
And yet could make the mystery plain and clear:
We claim it, we must know, we are so near—
Just on the verge of the all-powerful word,

Its whisper is around us ; we have heard
Its echo, give the answer now and here.
Thou wilt not ? See the many weary rounds
We've climbed already, how life longer grows ;
But ever in our ear some voice resounds,
" Ye gain a day, but after, no man knows."
Dost thou hold back because thy secret dread,
Revealed, would leave us blasted, stark and dead ?

We see thy face contorted, racked with pain ;
We see the limbs we bind trembling with fear ;
We search, thy secret now we come so near
That we no longer will in doubt remain.
Tell us, O queen of life, we dare, we claim,
Can we death conquer ? Can we learn the way ?
Is there for man, if he but knew, a day
Of endless pleasure in a deathless frame ?
Or is disease only a shorter road,
A blessing, with a frown upon its face,
A speedier, happier ending of the race
That still must end in death's forlorn abode ?
And is thy silence, if we did but know,
Only thy kindness, hiding endless woe ?

ARCHETYPES.

The flower looks up, the blushing fruit
Ever to reach perfection tries ;

From the vast trunk of life some shoot
Springs newly, tho' it falls and dies.

The teeming life in every form
Grows, age by age, toward beauty's height,
Glow brighter in its color warm,
Or whiter in its dazzling white.

All do their task ; they strive to mount
Some height beyond, we cannot see ;
In patience, while the years we count,
They strive thro' an eternity.

And ever in some unknown place,
For each thing, lives its perfect type,
Beyond the bounds of earth and space,
Waiting till time itself be ripe.

Then, face to face, our perfect flower
Shall gaze upon its image pure,
And man himself, in that blest hour,
Shall stand, like God, secure.

PANDORA'S CELL.

Pandora's box the cell is, given man
As his inheritance, and when the lid

Is opened by the woman of the race,
Out come, in swarms, the senses, sight and sound,
And all our love of art, and music sweet,
And all the powers that struggle with the world ;
But still unsatisfied, unhappy still,
Man, hopeless, lives, until, within the cell,
He finds the hope of all things hid away,
That are to come and bless his future day.

LATENT RELIGION.

If all the effort of our aim at art,
With our faint reaching out for beauty's lines
And our small melodies that seem so sweet,
Are but the revelations of a power
That makes within us for the truth of God,
And helps us in our struggles to ascend,
Thro' Gothic arch and mellow symphony,
And hymn and chant, the nearer to his throne,
Surely, as these poor handmaidens of truth
Are themselves true, nor ever to be scorned,
Even in rude beginnings, then may we
Be bold for truth, and claim this also true,
That every impulse of a soul for God,
From earliest ages and from foulest source,
Was but a lifting of the hands for help,

Was but a raising of dull eyes to see
What, as the arms grew stronger and the eyes
Gained in their power to bear the dazzling light,
Surely was God's own self seen far away.
Yet, if some doubt and claim that surely he
Should manifest his truth so very plain
That none can doubt it, or can question ask,
Then we can point them back to nature's plan.
See the slow way that all creation creeps ;
See how it reaches and has many a fall
Ere it be landed on the solid ground.
This is the law of life, and why should we
Think that, in things supernal, other laws
Should hold than this one, other speedier ways,
When all our history the same story tells
Of lost endeavor, countless overthrow,
Only to rise once more for new attempt,
With slowest progress. Time has not yet come,
Nor has it fulness, wherein man can say,
This is the end and this the Perfect Truth ;
This is the goal ; no longer need we strive ;
For strife perpetual seems the law of worlds,
And struggle endless is the law of life ;
And we believe that safely stored away
In the small cell, and in the dot minute
That represents to us the germ of life,
Must lie the impulse to reach out to God,

Since all creation has it ; hidden long,
But in time ripening, as those other powers
Ripen and burst into our finished sense
When man is fitted to believe and know.



“The gaily painted wing of insect bright.”

A CREED FOR TO-DAY.

The time is past when man can longer say,
"I do believe, and yet I nothing know."
And creeds must stand or fall, in modern day,
Beneath the sun of knowledge and its glow.

I can believe in an almighty power,
Far off and near—elsewhere, yet ever here—
To whom a million years are but an hour ;
I can believe, and tremble in my fear.

But of his being, of his heaven, the ways
He walks in, how he made this world of ours,
This is but myth of bygone, childish days ;
Yet still I tremble, till I see his flowers ;

Until I mark the plumage of the bird,
The gaily-painted wing of insect bright,
The pure, sweet face of childhood—in a word,
The beauty of the world by day and night.

Then to my soul I say, in whisper low,
No cruel or unheeding power is here ;
No demon warms us with this sunbeam's glow,
For to his heart his creatures must be dear.

But stop ! Life is, and life doth cease to be ;
Happiness is the passing of a day ;

Death and destruction, war and misery,
Ever among the flowers and sunbeams play.

For beauty withers ; at its heart decay
Steals ever in and saps its eager life.
Man, bird and insect are but for a day,
And songs are drowned in cries of endless strife.

And then I ask, " Is death the hideous thing
Which we imagine—pallid, dire of mien—
Or doth it to each living creature bring
Something beyond, more blessed, though unseen?"

Life cannot be the valued gift we think
When beauty he so cares for, else would he
Spare life for us, not drive us o'er death's brink
Into some dark abyss of misery.

And just because the trees grow in the light,
And just because the birds sing in the morn,
I feel that death is not the gate of night,
And that our dying is but to be born.

Seems nature wasteful? God is nature ; then
When all the powers of earth are saved with care
And stored away, none lost beyond our ken,
Why should our life, the best, so badly fare?

Heat, light, electric force and chemic power
Change but among themselves ; are ever one ;

Yet man despairs of more than one brief hour,
While endless time has yet its course to run.

Death is no foe, else were the God untrue
Who crowds with varied life the earth, the sky,
Who sends the light in strands of many hue,
And fills with human love humanity.

'Tis but the endless turning of the wheel,
'Tis but the dancing atoms rearranged ;
Still are they there, and man will ever feel
That scenes may shift, yet he be still unchanged.

For love can never die, the poets say—
And poetry is the voice of God in man—
And men may faint and fail and pass away,
But the eternal being never can.

Love cannot die ; man only dies to be
Raised to another life of joys unknown ;
For nothing can be lost, but endlessly
We live and love, we sin and we atone.

How? we know not. Where, we shall some day
know ;
But to despair why should we, fearful, yield?
Eyes may not see the hidden, far-off glow,
But life and death are but the selfsame shield.

Here we see death, a grim and awful wall ;
There we may see it as the gate of bliss ;
Though from that side no loving voices call,
They may be listening for a voice from this.

“THRO’ A GLASS DARKLY.”

The misty whorl of stars
Swept dreamily
As by an idle wind
That idly blows,
Wreathing their diamond dust
In luminous bars
That yet, between,
Limitless depths
Of ebon space disclose ;

Are these thy worlds, O Soul,
The hosts we see,
And millions yet unseen
Thy boundless field,
In which, in time that’s endless,
Thou shalt be
Possessor, prince and king,
When life to thee
Its garnered stores shall yield ?

CREATION.

Maker, however great thou art, how little I,
Yet, in my puny part, I emulate
Thy power divine, and would myself create
Something like thine beneath my little sky ;
For in my soul, a spark of thy great light,
There burns an agony of mad desire
To people all my brief and lonely night
With worlds like thine of ever-burning fire.
Creation of creation : didst thou fill
My soul with longing which I cannot still ?

Maker, is this, thy world, a story sad,
Made by thee to beguile some idle hour,
Or to forget, in dreams, thy endless power ?
Are all our pulsing thoughts, now grave, now glad,
These souls of ours that struggle on in life,
And faint, and fail, and end in hopeless death,
But fancies to thee, viewing all the strife,
To us so endless, but to thee a breath ?
And shall we vanish, with our worlds and sun,
When unto thee comes some new day begun ?

FORCE.

Out of the wonderful web
Of the unknown world-power

Drag we a strand, if we can,
Make it our slave for an hour ;
Use it as tho' we create it,
With buzzing of wheels ever flying ;
Use it, abuse it, berate it,
Too, when heedlessly dying ;
But when the wheels cease spinning,
And all the machinery slumbers,
We yet know not its beginning,
And beyond stretch infinite numbers.
What are ye, forces electric,
Magnetic, ye powers abounding,
Locked in the water and air,
And released by the spirit of fire ?
What are ye, waves never ending,
Into the telephone sounding,
Circling the world in your flying
On the slender telegraph wire ?
Out of the wonderful web
Of an unknown, invisible world-power
We drag the strands we can find,
And use them a day or an hour ;
But the source of their being,
To whom they are rightly belonging,
We know not, but claim all, unseeing,
Reaching ever for more in our longing.

THE LAW OF LIFE.

In God's great law of life
Lies law of death.
If life be right
In his grand sight,
And living breath,
Then also death,
For both are one.
His blazing sun
Sinks in the night
To rise in light
On each new day begun.

GOD, FATE AND CHANCE.

God is the power of compassion endless,
But by his side stands Fate, silent and grim,
Holding his arm when he would aid the friendless,
Hiding his mercy when our eyes grow dim.

Stern Fate is colder than the God we cherish,
Nor is he moved by prayer or bitter tears.
He looketh down, unheeding, while we perish,
Regarding not old age nor tender years.

Mad Chance is Fate that never cares for willing,
But lets the lot fall idly where it may,
Raising one up to honor, thousands killing,
Caring not where it falls by night or day.

Chance is the soulless daimon of the sages,
The driven cloud before the fitful gale,
Ever the unsolved problem of the ages,
Hiding the face of God with motley veil.

TO THE SPHINX.

The world around us is an ancient book
That time has tampered with, dropt here a blot,
Or lost a page, just where we wish to read ;
But in it lie the secrets of our race—
All that the past can tell us, all that points
On to the future and the destined place
To which we journey by so many ways.
The very plan on which our lives are formed
Is writ there for the reader, yet how few
Go past the cover, with its binding gay,
Its sky-blue, ocean-purple, and the green
Of tree and meadow, and the golden lines
The sun marks on it thro' the lingering day ;
And the few readers who dip here and there
Gaze dreamily on words and lines that stir

A passing wonder, and anon they turn,
Listlessly glancing down a page or two,
And shut the book and say, "How wonderful,
How beautiful is nature and how kind,"
While all the time the riddle of their lives
Waits for their guessing, and the silent sphinx
Gazes across the teeming plains of life
To hear the answer that man never finds.
Yet, step by step, the tireless student treads,
Till in a moment, like a bolt from skies
All cloudless, flames an answer to his eyes.
For he can see how nature strives for life,
And watch until a million million seeds
Fall to the earth that one may cling and grow.
He marks the millions perish, and he peers,
With glass, into the secrets of their growth,
Reaching down to the origin of life
And studying the first step in being ; there,
Even there, below the struggle of the sex,
The allurements and repulsions, hates and loves,
He stands amazed at a new world of strife,
And looks aghast at millions in the gulf,
Straining to reach the solitary cell,
And give it life ; and then the cell itself,
Virgin, maternal, filled with unknown power,
He watches, as it chooses or repels,
Till one life grows by union, while too late

Millions—unmated, lone and desolate—
Fall back into the endless waste of death.
Then must he pause and ponder : who desires
This life so madly ? Can it be a god
Who urges on a million germs that fail
Where one succeeds ? or is each separate germ
One single spark of life that longs to be ;
A soul minute, that burns to take its chance,
Enter into the world of living things
And mount to manhood ? If such grand desire
Live in each tiny dot, each atom small,
Whence comes it but from burning passion's fire
To regain its life and conquer back the joys
It once possessed, but lost when pallid death
Swept it away to join the uncounted throngs
That stretch from earth to heaven and clamor long
Before the gate of life, where many strive,
But few can enter ; where are endless years
That make the eternal hell of lost desires,
Striving for new fulfilment ? See the chain
To which they cling, the links of blessings lost,
Of love of life, of country, home and kin,
The desire intense to leave, on the lost earth,
Children, successors to the parents dead.
Surely no god would urge them on to life
With half the power with which the soul would
strive

To quit the darksome underworld and gain
The blessed sunshine of remembered days ;
And hell may be the struggle of lost souls
To gain a foothold on the longed-for earth,
And heaven be life, the life they knew and lived
Ages ago, or yesterday, and lost
What time disease, old age or cruel war,
Led on by hosts invisible to men,
But eager for their places, swept away
Their blessed lives and turned to night their day.
So strive they now to gain an access there ;
Repulsed above, they vainly turn below,
Willing to creep to life on any terms ;
Plotting and striving, leading men astray,
Coming as minions of disease to slay,
Stealing as passion to the hearts of men,
And joying in the slaughter, leaping high
On the sea-waves to o'erwhelm and to destroy ;
Whom men call fate, blind chance or providence,
Or blame high God for ills cast on their head
By a million brothers, raging, lost and dead.
But as these once used life, so destiny,
Affinity to like, some way unknown,
Decrees it easy, or too hard, to live ;
Makes the world's outcast, cast forevermore
Out to the swarming souls that wait without,
Who writhe and strive before that outer gate

That up from outer darkness bars the way
By which to enter, while it swiftly opes
To him who lived a blessed life before.
Yet highest blessing, there, is not to need
Life any more, but ever safe to be
Upon some distant star, which man may not
Ever o'ercrowd, and of whose very name
He lives all unfamiliar, calls it heaven,
And rest and peace, or happy, endless sleep,
But shudders chill at thought of dismal hell,
Not knowing what or where it be, nor hears
Above the din of ages, thrilling his ear
Unheeding, words misunderstood and vain,
Cried by earth's wisest and most perfect seer,
To him who asked, "Ye must be born again."

TO THE CHERUBIM.

Cherubim guarding the gate
Wide as the way of the morning,
Darkness before ye, and fate,
Behind, the gleam of the day,
How can ye longer wait,
A myriad suppliants scorning,
Silent and stern and cold,
Forever barring the way?

Can ye guard thro' the ages
The tree whose leaf is undying,
Crush in the heart of the race
The hope that springs in its breast,
Gazing off in the darkness,
Hearing our praying and crying?
Can ye drive us afar,
And keep us forever from rest?

Strike down the sword, and its flaming
Quick let the darkness cover;
Hide from a merciful eye
The deed and the error of old;
Bring back to Eden the lost,
Restore the dead to his lover,
Let in the life of the world
To the arms that would ever enfold.

IGNORANCE.

As we deal with our children, so does He
Deal with our wayward race, still children all.
Time will unfold, all must be told,
But let the secret of eternity
Stay for a moment; for beyond recall,
When once we know, crowd all the evil things
That lie about us in the dark, whose wings

Flutter above, while we, in infant glee,
Watch their dim shadows, though we never see
The awful certainty that knowledge brings.

AGE.

Age, tho' it standeth nearest to the verge
Of the unknown, looks out with unmoved eye ;
It feels no trembling dread, tho' time doth urge
It to the very gate of earth's great mystery.
Time blunts the dread and soothes the frantic fear,
As to the unseen world it drags its victims near.

PERSONALITY.

Lost name, lost fame,
Lost pride, lost shame ;
Even this form I soon shall lack
That from the mirror glances back ;
If these be lost, what will remain,
When even the memory, sharp, of pain
Be gone, and joys remembered thrill
No more the frame whose heart is still?

But if some name I bear,
And the companionship I share,

Of the innumerable dead,
Remains to me when life is fled,
Then may I enter death and dare
To claim my heritage, nor care
For a lost name, in dreaming, dropped,
For a lost heart, in throbbing, stopped.

Tho' lost be everything I own
But the undying I alone,
To it may cling as years go on,
Like strains of half-forgotten song—
Sad shades of sorrow, dreams of joy,
Which hours of reverie may employ,
While new endeavor will new meaning give
To the new name in which I still shall live.

DUST.

Only a beam of light
Shining in corner dusty,
Bringing forth to the sight
All that was hidden and musty ;
Only the dust of the air
Seen in the sunbeam's glory,
Dust of foul and of fair,
Dust with its commonplace story.

Numberless atoms of dust
Floating in beams of light,
Sparkling a moment, they must
Soon fade out in the night ;
Crying, in glory resplendent,
“ We are eternal, and ever
Shine we as lights independent,
On in our brightness forever.”

Darkness falls on the dusty
Specks of the wear of creation.
Down to their hiding-place musty
Sink they in dark desolation ;
Fading and gone from our seeing,
Wrecks of the wear of creation ;
Fallen forever from being,
Lost in a sunless damnation.

THE SOUL OF CREEDS.

Seek we a new religion that will meet
The assaults of science, reconcile each doubt,
Embrace each doubter, do all this without
Robbing the world of consolation sweet?
Ah! who can find it? Tho' it lie concealed
Deep in the heart of every ancient creed,
Yet for its finding, the discoverers need
To have the truth in their own hearts revealed,
And know how off to strip the useless husk
Of dogma from the perfect truth away,
And clear the web that hides its shining ray,
And turn to glorious day our sombre dusk;
Yet all have taught it, saint and inspired seer,
But man has covered o'er its light, in hate and fear.

When beacon-fires grow pale, and light we know
And look to, into deeper darkness fades,
Leaving scant hope that, even as wandering shades,
We may survive when into death we go,
Then strikes the thought, with one malignant blow,
Into the soul's heart, that, when life is fled,
We, with our wondrous minds, may be as dead
As all the motile atoms that below
We count in scorn; the creatures, row on row,
Set in ascending series, as the links

Between the inanimate and proud man who thinks,
And would forever on in wisdom grow ;
And then we, restless, turn and glances throw,
Not to the darkened sky, but to the mists below.

Is there no certainty, no knowledge then,
To rest upon? Must the poor soul attain,
Or lose, fruition, yet in doubt remain
Till it has passed beyond the homes of men?
Must martyrs die for truth beyond their ken,
And pass from flame to doubt, while we, who wait,
Hurl useless question at the ominous gate,
Or to a groundless hope respond, "Amen?"
Is all conjecture, and is nothing sure?
Nothing revealed to cheer the fainting heart
And nerve the sufferer while the pangs endure
That thro' his frame, shrinking with agony, dart?
Must life and soul go out to a dark fen,
Whose mist may hide heaven—or some devil's den?

O Plato, let us turn in doubt to thee,
Search thy forgotten page and study o'er
Thy lines to find a meaning, missed before,
When we were happy children and heart-free,
And life was bright before us, and the knee
We bent to old belief, that made us sure
That we were heirs, with future all secure,

Of golden ages of eternity.

Now, without faith, unsheltered, to the storm

We bend our heads, clinging, in doubt, and say,

“O teacher, wisest of the elder day,

To thee we come ; thy light will surely warm

Our trembling hearts, chilled with the thought that
time

And earth form all man's heritage sublime.”

And from thy pages, words of comfort rise,

Dropped from the lips of one who passed his days

Seeking the highest wisdom and its ways,

And an eternal, not the Olympian, prize.

“Unto the just no ill can e'er befall

Here or hereafter.” If it please the Power,

That o'er us rules, unto himself to call

Our wearied souls, we wait the welcome hour ;

Or if to endless sleep he will that we

Sink, as a child may, in the arms of night,

Our mother, bending o'er us tearfully,

Whatever fate he gives us, God does right.

But the soul cries, “Give answer ; shall I be

Blotted from life, or live eternally ?”

All lands, all ages, struggled to attain

The blessed truth with tears, while we are still

Wrapt in the sordid thought, how best to fill
Our lives with riches, and with them remain.
They were in earnest ; they were ever fain
To search the land and sea for gods to love,
To pierce with earnest eye the blue above,
And delve with eager hand the spreading plain.
And were they granted a success we miss ?
Did they come nearer to that Holy Grail
Than we, who dream of futures lost in bliss,
While spent in daily care we toil and fail ?
And runs there thro' the old beliefs one strain
That we have missed and never may attain ?

Ye dwellers in the early Attic clime
Who peopled with your gods the woods and pools,
Whose groves and temples were the only schools
Wherein ye studied, and whose books sublime
Dwelt on the mystery of life and time,
Which we, in our mad race for wealth, forget,
Till at the last we long, with faint regret,
A moment, ere we perish in our crime,
Can ye not tell the seeking soul to-day
The secret of your " Mysteries," and the peace
They gave to earnest hearts, the blessed ray
They shed upon the souls of ancient Greece ;
For tho' we strive those mysteries to unfold,
The hand of silence to your lips ye hold.

And richest wisdom from some fount ye drew ;
Self-sacrifice ye taught ; the lesson deep
That he alone, who loseth, life may keep ;
That death for others is the mighty clue
That leads the labyrinthine mazes through,
And brings us, at the end, to peace and light,
Out of the doubt and all the clinging night,
Into God's sky of dazzling, perfect blue.
So on the world the mighty legends grew,
Of some Prometheus, for the gift of flame,
Forever bound in torment, and the name
Of Heracles, and Orpheus, and the true
Soul of the trembling Psyche, as she drew
Her weary feet thro' death, to love pursue.

And all the elder faiths in this agree,
And thro' them all there runs a thread of gold
To knit them, and their rags together hold,
Of Priestcraft, Dogma and Formality.
Ever they cry, that all the lives we see—
Insect and flower and everything that is—
Belong to God and are forever his,
From lowest atom to humanity.
Ever when God cried to his devotee,
“ Give ! ” he gave back—his first-born to the flame,
His flock, his first-fruits—and he puts to shame
Our boasting faith with pure sincerity,

When, in his tears and his heart's agony,
He casts his dearest in God's fire and sea.

And Egypt rises to the seeking mind,
With her great mysteries ; but the busy hand
Of time unrolls her mummies, and they stand
Forth to the light, with all their thought refined ;
And though the world be careless and inclined
To question if she knew what we can know,
In all this progress and the brilliant glow
Of science, yet the more as we unwind
The spiced cerements of a faith that's dead,
And view it lying silent, bronzed with age,
The blood in the dry limbs no longer red,
But stilled forever from life's fevered rage,
We read, marked on thy forehead, wrinkle-lined,
Thou priest of Isis, "Mystery divined."

What could ye tell, ye lips so dry and cold ?
What unto us reveal ? The quest of earth ?
The secret of our life and of our birth ?
The story of a world even then grown old ?
Could all thy priests ever to us unfold
Their wealth of wisdom, should we wiser be,
And happier, or would bleak eternity
And all its secret lie to us unrolled,
As thou dost lie, so mute, in thy lost land ?

And didst thou hide, beside thy sacred Nile,
Under the mantle of its yellow sand,
On thy mute lips a bitter, scornful smile,
While all the world went madly on its quest
For the great secret locked within thy breast?

Speak out, ye ancient oracles of Greece ;
Give sign, ye Indian sages, wise and pure ;
Can the perturbèd soul ever endure
The throes of death, and gain a blest release ?
Shall it leap, joyful, to the arms of peace,
And live in realms of joy, unstained by sin ?
Or shall it come to birth, again begin
An endless round of living, not to cease
Till storms are o'er and the rapt soul can cry,
" My heart, no longer fixed on earth, doth long
Ever for the infinite, and all my song
Is, into blessed restfulness to die,
And dying to the world and things of time,
To find the life it lost in love's all-perfect clime ?"

Prophet of Islam, burning soul who saw
In the hot winds and in the desert sands,
And in the fleeting visions o'er thy lands,
Sun-blasted, still God's everlasting law ;
Whose iron creed, borne on the flashing blade,
Rose o'er the world triumphant, till, aghast,

The wondering nations trembled, falling fast
Before thy onslaught ; scorned, beset, betrayed,
But ever, living, dying, to the soul,
Ordained thou art to witness in the world,
And carry on thy banners, wide unfurled,
Thy fragment of the truth's almighty whole :
" There is no God, but God, and he alone
Is the one God that man has ever known."

And thou, Religion of the western land,
Many-faced, mystic, rapt in pure desire,
Yet ever wrangling ; waging war with fire
And blood-stained sword, and kinsmen hand to
hand ;

Thou, thro' thy very hates, where'er they strove
Bitter as gall, still pure did keep thy shrine,
Wherein there lay inscribed this wondrous line,
Treasured thro' darkest ages, " God is love."
So mystic Hermes, on the verge of time,
Told to the world that " God is wisdom pure,"
And old Judea cried, " God doth endure
Forever, and he knows no day nor clime."
His wisdom, love and power the creeds proclaim,
Tho' oft they hide his glory in the shadow of their
shame.

Come, Science, teacher of our latest day,
Your light on God and man for mortals shed ;

Revive the hearts that for a faith have bled,
That you, with cold disdain, have swept away.
Do evolution and your theories lay
Their rule aside when man aspires to see,
Beyond your form and law, the Deity ;
Seeking for truth, even tho' at last he may
Fall earthward, blinded by its piercing ray ?
Can seer and prophet tell the dreams they saw,
Thro' all the cloud that veiled their early day,
Yet live beyond your universal law ?
Or is that law so grand that we obey
Its mandate when we search the future gray ?

What right has man to loudly claim that he
Is made of finer dust than beast or bird ?
That while *he* lives forever, 'tis absurd
To grant them equal immortality.
Are, then, the flowers, the bees, the innumerable things
That bloom and fly and perish in a day,
More than we, evanescent ? To the ray
That starts from distant stars, and on its wings
Of light speeds for ten thousand years, and brings
To earth its twinkle, in its quivering beam,
How transient must both we and all things seem
In which man glories and to which he clings ;
But Science smiles, and her cold silence stings,
As o'er our hope her mantle gray she flings.

For ways are God's, which, to our keenest sight,
Are dark and devious, and they lead us fast,
Far as the eye of man can see, at last
Into the everlasting shades of death and night.
The lonely watcher on the highest tower
Of doctrine, built by priest and teacher wise,
Sees but, above him, ever darker skies,
That mock his effort and his boasted power.
Deep in our hearts our trembling spirits cry,
"O Infinite, whom we have tried to know,
Tell us, poor mortals, whither must we go
When, in the ending of our day, we die?"
But still the ages pass, nor sign they give
That man, beyond this life, may ever live.

Life and the living, time and many years,
Are in eternal reckoning nothing worth ;
Nor are the prizes and defeats of earth,
Nor merriment, nor endless prayers and tears,
But that the race should live and rule the earth,
That life in countless forms should bud and bloom,
New generations spring, as in the tomb
The elders vanish ; this alone has worth
To the divine and mighty power who rules
The changing nations and their changing face ;
Nor cares he aught for Men nor any race,
But wills that *Man* shall live, and ever fools

The sons of men, who build up creeds and cry,
"By these we climb to him and cannot die."

O Creeds, ye fail ; like human lives ye flourish
On myth and mystery, till ye fade and die ;
Like to the race whose hopes ye vainly nourish,
And with them in their grave ye silent lie.
But of your soul, the immortal part ye cherish,
Hidden within your edifice of clay ?
Surely it lives ; for never yet may perish
A spark of light from God's eternal ray.
Not from the heaven it fell once for our saving,
When half the race had perished with the drought,
Coming to calm the lips in anguish raving,
And win, too late, the victory over doubt ;
For since man first upon his planet trod,
He held within his heart the light of God.

Up from the depths of night he slowly rose,
Grasping each jutting cliff, each crevice small ;
And to his soul, still mounting, knowledge grows,
Of him who made him and who ruleth all.
Ever in creeds of cruelty and wrong
He weaves the right and glories in the true ;
Ever in aspiration's sweetest song
He echoes every soul that slowly grew
Out of the darkness, holding fast the ray

That glimmers in his heart, until it be
Like and more like unto that perfect day
That ever shines above him full and free,
Till evolution, God's untiring plan,
Evolves a God-like soul from lowly man.

This is your soul—God's voice forever crying
Out in each cell and thro' each complex whole ;
The voice that thro' the ages faintly stole
On the world's sense, in living and in dying ;
The force unseen that urges to its flying
The new-fledged bird, that points the tendril high
Up toward the sun ; that suffers not to die
The lonely seed, but cheers it, ever trying
To win its way to nobler and to higher ;
Tho' oft o'erthrown, tho' hopeless lying low,
In each attempt coming one step the nigher,
To heaven's bright crown, won from embattled woe.
Your soul is the great soul in all, that strives
To reach perfection, thro' uncounted lives.

Ever it strives through every darkest age
To bring to birth a soul that loves the light,
That it may shine, star-like, amid the night,
In some blest calm above our human rage.
Ever the world takes madly up the gage,
Hating the soul that spurns its low delight,

And drives it down to death or far in flight,
And ruin overwhelms the heaven-born sage.
But through the years, in anguish and in tears,
These human stars appear, and shine an hour,
And by their light, 'mid doubt and clinging fears,
The sons of men wax strong in faith and power,
And, mounting higher, in the strife engage
That yields at last life's blessed heritage.

THE CREED OF CREEDS.

Strip off the husk and tear the tinsel gold
Ages have wrought and stained with burning tears,
Wash off the clinging blood, the despairing fears,
The cruel dogmas, merciless and cold,
And under all, and deep within each shell,
As in a shrine, made foul without by sin
But glowing with a holy light within,
Lies writ one creed, that he who runs may spell;
A power beyond, a brotherhood around,
A heaven to enter, for the souls who love;
A life to lose, a life that must be found
Not in the void of azure skies above,
But in the soul itself, made pure and free—
On earth, or far, or near—there heaven will be.

TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY

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